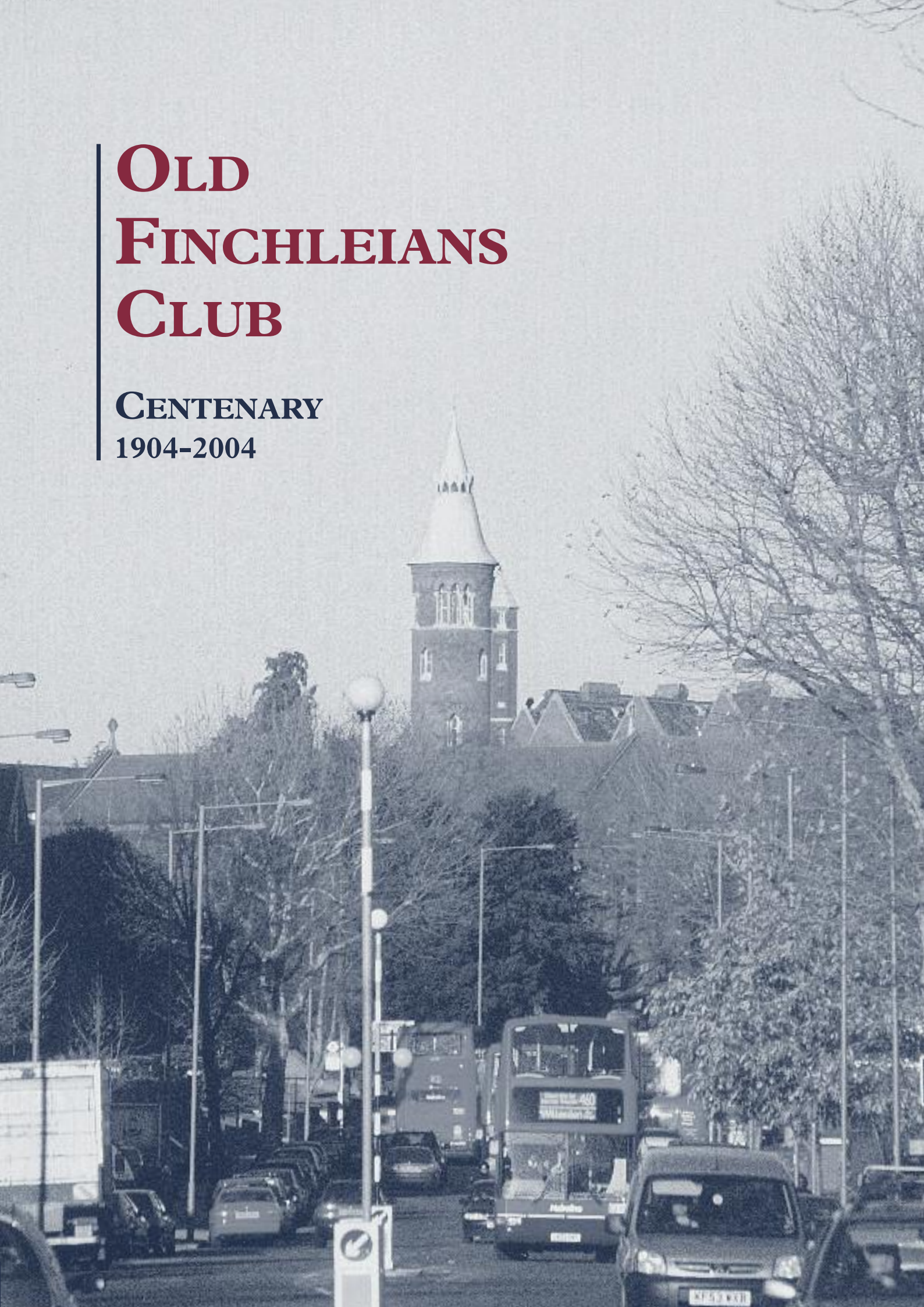
Old Finchleians Club

Centenary
1904-2004



Old Finchleians Club

Centenary

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This Centenary Book has been compiled by a Sub-Committee consisting of Geoff Owen (Chairman), John Bowra (Secretary), Colin Byatt (Co-Ordinator), Dave Holyland (Printer), Ian Bone, Brian Fuller, Nigel Lambert, Bob Leeds, Geoff Niblett, Mick Wiffen and John Wilkes. Other contributors include Alan Jackson, John Niblett and Brian Wisbey.

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FOREWORD

This book represents the first hundred years of the Old Finchleians' Club which was founded on 9th March 1904. Some will be confused immediately by the fact that the Football Club celebrated their Centenary in 2001. Suffice to say that this unusual state of affairs was created by the School changing their winter game from rugby to soccer just before the end of the 19th century. A more detailed explanation of the happenings in this period are included in the book.

Firstly, it gives me great pleasure to thank the various Old Finchleian members who by their efforts have made this book possible by researching and writing the various parts of the book. In alphabetical order they are – Ian Bone, John Bowra, Colin Byatt, Brian Fuller, David Holyland, Alan Jackson, Nigel Lambert, Geoff Niblett, John Niblett, Michael Wiffen, John Wilkes, and Brian Wisbey. Thanks also to Terry Payne, Keith Eldred and John Gardiner who raked around their attics and found some of the photographs which have been reproduced.

The Club is currently in a strong position and obviously this has much to do with the likes of Reg Mander and those other members associated with the freehold purchase of five acres of land in Woodside Park for a permanent home for the Club in March 1946.

Those who enjoy the comforts of our excellent Clubhouse which was opened in 1967 probably do not remember, as I do, our first clubhouse which was a cosy little hut which stood where the groundsman's shed is now. The facilities were somewhat spartan with a curtain across the solitary toilet to give limited privacy and six baths which were just big enough for two persons each (with one sitting on the edge waiting for a vacancy). It was a great advantage to kick off early as the colour of the water was quite dark by the time the third and last group entered!!

Lighting was by Tilley oil lamp but in those days as now, the great spirit which personifies the Old Finchleians Club was something which only comes from the members within and let us hope that after another hundred years, the same sentiments are being expressed.

Finally on a personal note, only five Old Finchleians have been President for more than one year – the very first one was Vyvyan Wells (1904-6) then E. Leslie Burgin and A.S. Bothwell due to the First and Second World Wars followed by David 'Taffy' Evans in the Football Club's Centenary Year (having previously been President in 1977/8). To be elected President for the second time in the Centenary year is obviously a great honour for me and I would like to thank the Club most sincerely.

Geoff Owen
Centenary President

CHAPTER 1:

THE FIRST FIFTY YEARS

This chapter is drawn from the Old Finchleians' Jubilee Book (1904-1954).

THE FOUNDING OF THE CLUB

The present Club began in the spring of 1904 under the name of 'The Finchleian Club,' although there was an Old Finchleians' Club in existence. Membership of the latter was confined to old boys of Christ's College, Finchley, who had left the school before it ceased being a boarding school in 1896. The founders of the new Club felt that this policy meant the older Club had entirely lost touch with the school, and a prime object of our Club is 'to keep alive amongst Old Finchleians interest in the welfare of Christ's College. This was written into the Club's first rules (7th April 1904) together with another main object of the Club 'to promote social intercourse and sports amongst its members.' Despite changes to the nature of the Club these have remained the principal rules to the present day.

The prime mover in the formation of the Club appears to have been Frederick Goodyear, who attended as a child the opening of the main school building in 1860 and who since had two sons at the College. Other main players were the Headmaster, J.T.Phillipson, Frederick Goodyear Junior, R.M.Lidstone and J.M.Scott. A preliminary meeting was held on 12th February 1904, which passed four resolutions:-

1. to ask members of the Old Finchleians whether they would become members of the new club;
2. that it was desirable that an Old Finchleian Club be formed with headquarters at Christ's College to cultivate as wide a range of interests as possible;
3. that a special object shall be the revival of the magazine; and
4. that a letter be sent to the Old Finchleians' Football Club declaring that there was no wish to run counter to their objects.

The history of the Football Club is well detailed in its own Centenary Book issued in 2001 (right – copies still available!) and summarised later in this book. Suffice to say there were amicable discussions between the new Club and the Football Club, and a meeting on 26th April 1905 ratified the amalgamation of the Football Club into the Finchleian Club.

After the preliminary meeting a better-attended one was held on 9th March 1904. Those present agreed to form themselves into a Club, together with others who had signified their intention of joining. The original members were: – J.T.Phillipson, O.H.Davies, F.H.Agar, T.E.Ayshford, D.F.Carr, A.H.Fisher, F. and J.B.Goodyear, H.Harrison, C.W.Hume, R.M.Lidstone, D.L.Medway, H.L.Meyer, P.D.Morris, J.M.Scott and R.C.Turnham.

The first business of the newly formed Club was to elect the officers. H.Vyvyan Wells, a well-known local solicitor, later to become Finchley's charter mayor was the first President, J.M.Scott was the first Secretary, until his elevation to the Presidency in 1911, and R.M.Lidstone was the first Treasurer, holding that office until 1909.

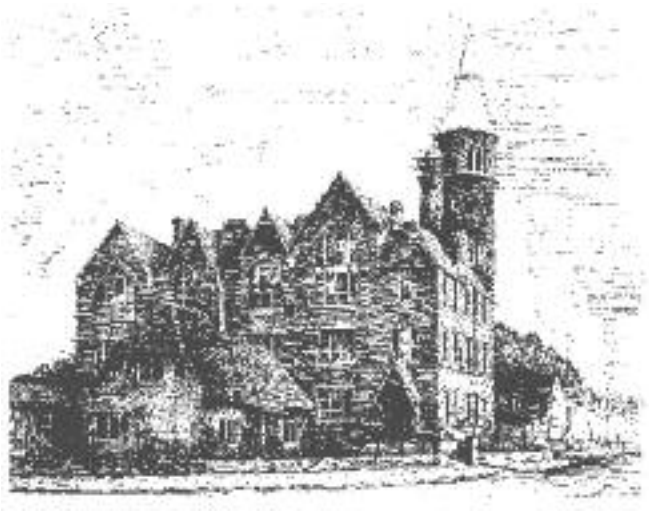
THE BEGINNINGS

What a different world it was in 1904! Those who founded the Club had not long ceased to be schoolboys, and the absence of its own home and common meeting-ground

needed to be rectified. The initiative to provide for a medium of association came from Frederick Goodyear Senior, the Chairman of the School Governors at the time. Other Old Boys joined in the pioneering work, but it was noted that responsibilities fell to those in the locality. C.D.Lamb lived in Hampstead, which he described as 'an intimidating remoteness. Communication, through open country, was infrequent, scarcely reliable….'

Meetings began to take place in the School, under the shadow of the tower, in the room that had formerly been the Headmaster's study. The Club's first enterprise was the launching of the Magazine, to record the manifold aspects of life at the School and the Club, bearing the full editorial and financial responsibility. The younger Frederick Goodyear was the first editor – he had a natural literary talent, proven in his subsequent career at Oxford and in London's journalistic circles. Sadly he was to meet an early death in France in the First World War. Money was tight, and each additional page had to be fought through the Committee that stood guard like a Treasury watchdog.

The Football and Cricket sections were expanding their fixture lists annually, and in these pre-television days the Debating Society flourished. In 1904 the Liberals had swept into power with a promise of vast changes, and social and political problems were of absorbing national interest. The section began on 25th November 1905, with the meeting strongly supporting 'Chinese labour in South Africa.' Feeling ran very high when Home Rule for Ireland was discussed later that year, the motion being defeated. And in February 1906, when 'Trade Unions' were the topic, no division was taken as 'No-one was prepared to vote 'No' lest it should imply that Trade Unions should be abolished, and no-one was prepared to vote 'Aye' lest Trade Unions in their present form should be taken as approved.' Other subjects debated included nationalisation of the railways, municipal pubs, socialism, unemployment and votes for women. The last item is worthy of further comment – it was a Ladies Night (March 1909) and Miss E.Wyatt of the National Women's Social and Political Union moved that the extension of the Parliamentary franchise to women was necessary in the interests of political justice and sex equality. The headmaster, J.T.Phillipson spoke against, and although over 200 attended, there were 'some cowardly abstentions in the voting,' the motion being lost 88-50.



School Sports Day in 1904 saw the first 'Old Finchleians' Handicap,' which was to become an annual exhibition of failing athletic prowess and startling underwear. Mr Phillipson had offered a prize for the first Old Boy to cover 120 yards – five ran and F.H.Agar won by one yard from R.M.Lidstone. This became a regular feature of School Sports Days and such was its popularity that heats had to be introduced in 1919.

The first Annual General meeting was held at the School on 3rd April 1905, attended by 20 members, a very good turnout given the size of the Club at that date. Attendances at AGM's up to 1914 averaged 40-50 members, a number we would dream of nowadays! The Club's original membership of 35 grew to 76 in the first year, with the hundredth member enrolled in January 1907 – by the onset of the Great War it had reached 245. The second AGM again saw Vyvyan Wells in the Chair having been re-elected as President for a second term – until recently the only other Presidents similarly honoured were those who carried on during the First and Second World Wars, E.L.Burgin and A.S.Bothwell respectively. This meeting discussed plans for the celebration of the School's 50th anniversary in 1907 and voted out of the Club's slender resources a donation towards the new Sports Pavilion, duly opened in the summer of 1909 and described as 'a trim little building, full of happy memories for many generations of schoolboys and Old Finchleians.' Sadly in recent times, this became a shadow of its former self and was destroyed by fire in 2002. Fortunately the cricket team boards had been removed and now hold pride of place in the clubhouse at Southover.

The first President – H. Vyvyan Wells photographed in his mayoral robes.

With the exception of the War Years, a Club Dinner has been arranged every year since the first one on 27th March 1905. This was held at the Holborn Restaurant where the President and about 25 other members enjoyed excellent fare at five shillings a head. During the evening a musical programme was performed. H.Furse was at the piano, F.S.Ashdown and J.T.Scott sang, Eric Blore (shortly off to

Hollywood where he became a familiar screen figure in character parts) provided two comic songs and a humorous recitation, and Frederick Goodyear simply a recitation. Exactly one year later, the second Dinner was held at the same venue, with nearly double the attendance. This remained the venue for some years, but on 14th February 1912 the eighth Annual Dinner was held at the Queen Alexandra Hall, the smaller room in the then new King Edward Hall at Church End, Finchley. Sixty members attended, and one guest, M.J.Sowerby, who was at the School in 1862-3, delighted the company with memories of the very early days. Among the artistes performing was Miss Gladys Austin, an accomplished singer, and the practice of engaging amateur or professional entertainers was followed for many years.

In the early days Dances were something of a headache to the organisers and to the Committee. The first was held at the Muswell Hill Athenaeum on 7th April 1910, and the attendance was encouraging enough for this to be repeated in April 1911. This lost money the infant Club could ill afford, so no dance was held in 1912. The following year a small sub-committee, led by dance enthusiast D.N.Scott ventured again and were warmly congratulated by the Committee on making a profit of two guineas. The minutes 'expressed the hope that a Dance on similar lines might be held next season.' Of course world events were to prevent this.

WAR BECKONS

After ten years of existence the Club was flourishing, with over 200 members and nine sectional Clubs – Boxing, Chess, Cricket, Debates, Drama, Fives, Football, Shooting and Swimming. There was still no clubhouse, but by kind permission of the authorities meetings were held in what was known as the Dining Room, although it was long since that dinners were served there and it now housed the School Library. AGM's, much better attended than today and 'far more vocal' were held in the Big Schoolroom as the gymnasium was then called. Here too the Dramatic Society played to appreciative audiences and laid the foundations of its long and distinguished career.

On 4th August 1914 war was declared and within a few weeks it seemed that the whole Club was in khaki. Recruitment was voluntary and before long there were pockets of Finchleians in all the more popular London units – the London Scottish, London Rifle Brigade, Artists Rifles, Royal Fusiliers, Honourable Artillery Company and the Royal Flying Corps, while motorcycle despatch-riding in the Royal Engineers was an attraction to a number.

Many members rose to high rank in the services and occupied positions of importance with distinction in the four quarters of the world. At least 570 Old Boys of the School joined the Colours, of whom 99 lost their lives and are commemorated on the Memorial Tablet now situated in the Assembly Hall at the 'new' School. The Decorations won included 4 DSO's, 1 DFC, 2 DSC's, 21 MC's, 6 MM's, 1 DCM, 2 French Croix de Guerre, 2 Italian Croce di Guera, 1 Russian Cross of the Order of St George and 1 Belgian Croix de Guerre.

BETWEEN THE WARS

The War over, the Club quickly got down to the task of restarting its old activities. This proved a formidable task as almost the whole strength of the Club from President downwards had been away on active service. Although sparsely-attended AGM's had been held each year during the War, it was not until 3 May 1919 that a truly representative meeting again took place – nearly 100 attended, new officers were elected and a new post of liaison officer with the School was created, held by an Old Boy rather than a boy still at school. Among other innovations was the inauguration of the Golfing section,

perhaps an indication that the more senior members were beginning to feel their age! Another new innovation was the Motorcycle section, although this had a short life. Generally the outdoor sections began to prosper, while the indoor ones languished and many eventually died. Among the casualties was the Shooting Section, despite an appeal for members, which said with fine understatement "all can now handle a rifle passably well." As the Jubilee Book observed, perhaps OF's had had their fill of shooting at targets that shot back! The old-established and popular Debating Society also fell by the wayside.

The annual dinner was also revived after the hostilities, with a Commemorative Dinner in July 1919 at the Holborn Restaurant, which drew a then record attendance (although the number is not recorded). The customary speeches and concert followed the food. Thereafter the venue varied – sometimes King Edward Hall, sometimes Les Gobelins or Gatti's. On 17 April 1925 it was at Frascati's and celebrated the Club's coming-of-age. Due to the heavy toast list the musical items were dropped and were only to be revived on rare occasions. H.W.Harben's services as Honorary Treasurer were especially recognised, and Sir William Tritten and Major-General O'Dowda were guests from the original Old Finchleians' Club. The Silver Jubilee was celebrated at the Café Royal, and the 1930 Dinner was notable for the first attendance of H.B.Pegrum, who had come from Mill Hill School as the new Headmaster of Christ's College the previous autumn.

The Dances were also revived after the War, starting with a Reunion Dance at King Edward Hall in 1920, attended by 206 people. This was the usual venue for many years, but in 1928 a movement for cheaper dances led by E.W. ('Uncle') Moeran (in 1946 to become the first Old Finchleian to be a Labour Member of Parliament) resulted in two successful evenings at Arcadia, Church End. The following year the experiment of inexpensive summertime dances was tried, with 102 tickets sold for the first in June, less for one in mid-August. There was another at the Arcadia in November before what was becoming described as the 'Annual Ball' at King Edward Hall in January 1930. Never again have four dances been attempted in one year! Perhaps the crowning glory of all was the February 1931 Ball, which featured the most elaborate floor-show ever put on by the Club – a tableaux representing the various sections of the Club, songs by Jim O'Malley (bandsman with Jack Hylton), a brief Russian play entitled 'The Mystery of the Five Year Plan' (featuring G.W.Goss and Reg Mander) and a burlesque prizegiving conducted by Rupert Casson in headmaster's cap and gown. The Club Secretary, A.F.Coldicott was presented with a cricket bat in recognition and appreciation of his many services to the Club. Dancing continued until 2am. Thereafter the dancing year settled down to an Annual Ball in the winter and one or two flannel dances in the summer.

By the end of the year ending 31 March 1934 the Club had reached a membership of 500 for the first time, and the accounts showed that the collection of club subscriptions was at a higher level than for some years before (and indeed afterwards!) J.E.Talbot, Hon. Treasurer at the time, writing in the Jubilee Book, puts this down to the fact that he was also the President in 1933/4. He notes that whilst as President he was convinced that every Old Finchleian had a heart of gold, but his tenure as Treasurer brought vividly to light that was where the simile ended. Magnets of every description were tried but extraction was never easy – plus ca change…….

The Club was still homeless, but in 1928 were granted the use of a room at CCF as a Club Room, and the President in May 1929 expressed the hope that the labours in making the first year a success would one day lead to a real Clubhouse of our own. It was to be seventeen years before that become a reality, of which more later.

In 1933 Finchley became a borough, and the Charter Mayor was an old Finchleian, Vyvyan Wells. He was succeeded by H. S. Syrett, an honorary member of the Club. Jumping forwards twenty years to Coronation year, another Old Finchleian, J.G.Bryson, was Mayor of Finchley. Also during the thirties the Club boasted three internationally celebrated athletes: B.F.MacCabe in the half-mile, G.N.Blake in the quarter-mile, and M.A.Hintze in the 100 yards. The Evening Standard in May 1935 suggested that these three, together with another OF, McMorran, in the 220 yards, would provide a relay team that would beat any other relay team from any school, past or present. The challenge was never accepted. After many years of discussion, the Old Finchleians Masonic Lodge was consecrated in October 1933 at Freemasons Hall, and held its meetings in the early days at King Edward Hall.

Significantly at the AGM in 1935 the name of the Club was altered to the 'Old Finchleians Club (1904)', after the original Club had decided, with only one against, that the younger body might bear the same name, 'provided that some date or other distinguishing mark be added to the title.' The two associations continued side by side until 1946. With membership reduced to a handful, the original pre-1896 Club decided to terminate its existence. One of our founders, H. W. Harben, who was a member of both clubs, performed one of his last and finest services in negotiating the handing over of one hundred guineas remaining of the older club's assets towards the Ground Fund. The '1904' was dropped from the title in 1949 and at long last the 'Old Finchleians' Club' was the official name.

The 1930's might be called 'the era of Coldy' in the annals of the Club. A.F.Coldicott was Secretary from 1928 to 1939 bringing, like many before and since, an initiative and energy to his many-sided tasks. He was also playing football for the first team, creating brilliant character parts in the Dramatic Society, and made the Dances a really

Club Dinner 1938

popular Club activity. The presentation of a cricket bat mentioned above was a reminder that he could play a pretty innings and bowl a crafty ball. He was succeeded in 1939 by Reg Mander – but that's another story!

WAR RETURNS

Not surprisingly, come the Second World War, most Club activities were suspended. The first year of 'phoney war' had seen shelters erected at the College, and Mr Pegrum left to join the Forces. Old Finchleians were again playing their part from the start in the armed forces or other forms of national service. Flying Officer W.W.Emden did not come back from the daring first raid on Wilhelmshaven in September 1939, and among the 'first of the few' was Reg Lovett, who survived a crash in flames in France, only to die a hero's death in the air battle, which saved Britain from invasion. Worthy of mention is Bob Stewart of Bomber Command, forced to land with his crew in Germany and become prisoners of war – after several attempted escapes they were annihilated by the enemy. Eric Williams was more fortunate – he escaped and told the tale in 'The Wooden Horse.' Again war brought a heavy toll to the Old Finchleians, ninety-three of whose names were inscribed on a second memorial tablet at Christ's College.

THE OLD FINCHLEIANS FIND THEIR HOME

Things began to happen again in 1944, and it was Reg Mander who set the ball rolling. A National Savings Society was formed – those with short memories being urged to sign Bankers Orders, those with long memories were reminded when they became short! Clearly the most important event in the history of the Club was the acquisition of its own Sports Ground and Clubhouse. This had often been discussed – indeed negotiations had begun to take a long lease on a field next to the Barn on the Barnet Bypass in 1939, but war put paid to that. Then in 1945 a ground in Southover, used for many years by the Holmwood School, came on to the market. The land was overgrown and neglected, and the owners would only sell, not lease.

What could be done? Visits were made to a benefactor who bought sports grounds and allowed clubs to use or rent them, and to charitable bodies who provided sports grounds for public use, without success – it was clear that the money would have to be raised by the Club itself, but how?

Reg had helped form the War Savings Society, so knew where some Old Finchleians' money lay. OF's were induced to become landowners and a 'Ground Fund' was opened at Barclays Bank, Church End, and in the meantime negotiations to buy the site commenced. The immediate financial response was disappointing – personal appeals were made to those thought to be well-off, and general appeals to all, and about £1,400 was raised in two months from about 150 people. More pleadings in different names and £2,000 was raised by the end of October 1945. We had agreed to buy the site and our lawyer, Tom King, had inspected the site with a plan apparently held upside-down! The Finchleian magazine of July 1946 recorded the purchase as follows: - "It consists of, for Finchley, a remarkably flat piece of ground of about 4.5 acres, which gives us enough room for two full-size football pitches and a fair-size cricket table, besides an odd plot or two for enthusiastic food-growers. The surroundings are pleasant: there are a number of fully-grown trees, and the whole ground is bordered by a thick hawthorn hedge. The whole of the western side faces a permanent open space, so there is no danger of being hemmed in. Finally, it is literally two minutes from Woodside Park Station on the Barnet-Morden tube." All (!) that was outstanding was how to raise the rest of the money, get the ground in order and what could

be done about a pavilion.

It was decided to issue Debenture Shares, and ultimately the Treasurer, Eddie Talbot, had £4,600 within his grasp. Members worked on the ground themselves and, to ensure quick progress, a 'licence-free' building was built and erected, the land was drained and a sports ground was in being and in action by 19th October 1946. Conditions were primitive, and much remained to be done. A groundsman was appointed and with the practical help of members Southover continued to improve. In 1948 the Clubhouse was much improved and enlarged, main drainage was installed in 1950 and in 1952 mains electricity was brought to the premises. It was an end to wandering for both the football and cricket sections, which were well-supported and had maintained the Club on a progressive footing. The two general meetings of 1949 launched the Memorial Ground Appeal, designed to make Southover a permanent remembrance of all Old Finchleians who laid down their lives in the two World Wars, by securing to the Club complete ownership of the ground, by building a worthy clubhouse and by improving the amenities in every possible way.

Without doubt, Reg Mander more than anyone is responsible for the Club owning its own ground. He may have scared some with his spectacular visions, he may have blinded some (even himself) with his scientific and arithmetical calculations, but he had one object in mind, which by his tenacity he achieved. The Club and its members are eternally grateful to him that we own a ground of which we can justly be proud. Let us not take things for granted – many think they are entitled to partake in unlimited benefits without effort. The acquisition of Southover and continued success of the Old Finchleians are due to the keenness of devoted members and its future depends on such spirit.

FIFTY YEARS AGO

The Club was starting to see the fruition of its labours in acquiring its own home. After the War, the Club was in a serious position regarding membership. The pre-War list, totalling 538, had been severely reduced by the loss of some one hundred members who gave their lives in the struggle and perhaps another 150 whose addresses were no longer known. Yet by 1954 the Club could boast a membership of 730 thanks to the flourishing state of all sides of the Club's activities. Southover, close contact with the School and the support of Mr Pegrum, tea-parties for those leaving school that had become an established part of the calendar and the offering of half-rate subscriptions for those leaving school all played their part. Primary though was the perseverance and hard-work of Reg Mander, Gordon Wilson and the Treasurer, Ken Wylie, assisted by a number of highly-efficient Ground Committee treasurers.

Activities had increased enormously and there was the mammoth task of making the Clubhouse into a presentable headquarters rather than just a sports pavilion, pending the day when a permanent structure could be built. So successful was the effort that it was the envy of many visiting clubs, but this would be wasted if the atmosphere was lacking. But this was (and still is) the Club's really strong feature. Activities were many and varied, ranging from the crush of Christmas parties to informal dances; from darts matches to Dramatic Society parties; tournaments, committee meetings, sectional meetings, cricket weeks – a never-ending stream of activity.

Important though Southover was, it was only one part of Club life. The underlying reason for the existence of the Club was for members to keep in touch with the school and those they knew there. This principle has kept the Club flourishing and is the reason for the rule that membership of the parent body was essential before being a playing member of a sporting section. The Dinners and Dances, both well-patronised since the War, the magazines and newsletters all helped to provide the means of keeping OF's in touch, especially those unable to visit Southover regularly. The arrival of the Golden Jubilee found the Club on the highest pinnacle it had reached in its fifty years.

M.P.W.

CHAPTER 2:

1954-1960

1954 saw the grounding of the De Havilland Comet, the world's first jet airliner after a second crash and the first flight of the Boeing 707 that was to dominate long haul air travel for nearly two decades; Roger Bannister running the first sub-four minute mile and Jim Peters collapsing just short of the line when leading the Empire Games marathon; the introduction by IBM of the first computer for business use; Lester Piggott winning his first Derby at age 18; and West Germany winning the World Cup after coming from 2-0 down to beat Hungary 3-2. Some things never change!

For the Old Finchleians Club 1954 was an even more momentous year, its Golden Jubilee. Membership rose to a record 750 and events to mark this important anniversary were held throughout the Club year 1954/55 under the Presidency of Leslie Hodge (1922-27) one of the stalwarts of the post war era. Leslie, who with Reg Mander (1911-17), Gordon Wilson (1923-29) and others did much to re-establish a flourishing club after the War is probably now remembered by younger OFs more as the long-time 1st XI cricket umpire and eminent member of "Grippers Corner", the gathering of elder statesmen at the end of the bar on Saturday and Sunday nights.

It is easy to forget that in the early fifties, World War II remained fresh in the memory, particularly of those who had lost friends and loved ones in the conflict. Until the 1980s an annual War Memorial Day was held at Southover in June and on 19 June 1954 it was entitled Jubilee Day. Held on one of the few hot and sunny days in a summer described in The Finchleian magazine as a 'holidaymaker's nightmare', this summer fete included a cricket match between club and school, children's sports, sideshows and a range of other events culminating in evening entertainment and dancing both inside and outside the old clubhouse. It was a well-attended and rousing occasion enabling many OFs to renew old friendships and by all accounts, not everyone present managed to negotiate their way to the exit as steadily as they had entered! Ray Simmons (1913-19) compiled a record of press cuttings, photographs and other souvenirs of this great occasion which he subsequently presented to the Club. Regrettably, as with many other club artifacts, no trace of it can now be found.

Three other major activities marked the Jubilee. On 26 November 1954, a Jubilee Dinner-Dance, attended by 150 people, was held at the Hendon Hall Hotel. Unusually for

Golden Jubilee Dinner Dance – November 26th 1954

those times, one of the OF wives was invited to speak and Dolly Hintze, as organizer, responded to a toast to the Ladies Working Party. The women obviously knew their place in those days!

On 17 April 1955 the Reverend Ronald Matthews, Rector of Finchley, held a service at Southover attended by over one hundred OFs to dedicate the ground and clubhouse to the memory of the old boys of CCF who died in two World Wars. Leslie Hodge unveiled the bronze memorial plaque that still takes pride of place in the lobby of the Clubhouse and in the eloquent words of R.A. Piddington (1916-24), records thus the feelings of Old Finchleians for their fallen comrades–

THIS GROUND AND CLUBHOUSE ARE A MEMORIAL TO THE OLD BOYS OF CHRIST'S COLLEGE FINCHLEY WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES IN THE TWO WORLD WARS – 1914/18 – 1939/45. BY MEN LIKE THESE OUR COUNTRY WAS SAVED. IN TRIBUTE TO THEIR SELF-SACRIFICE WE WHO KNEW THEM HAVE PRESERVED THIS ENGLISH FIELD NEAR THE HOMES OF THEIR SCHOOLDAYS. WE HAVE TRIED TO MAKE HERE A PLACE OF GOOD FELLOWSHIP WHERE THEIR NAMES SHALL STILL BE HEARD AMONG FRIENDS.

The Clubhouse and ground now belonged entirely to the Club but William Blake's words echoed across Southover that afternoon as a reminder that the memorial would not be complete until a permanent clubhouse, was built …."nor shall my sword sleep in my hand, Till we have built Jerusalem, In England's green and pleasant land."

The Golden Jubilee Dinner was held at the Connaught Rooms on 15 April 1955 attended by over 200 Old Finchleians, an easy record. Rupert Casson (1905-12) wittily proposed the toast to the Club and the President and in his reply Leslie Hodge recounted the astonishing number of activities that had taken place during his Presidential year. The Finchleian magazine records that, in response to the toast to the school, Headmaster Pegrum "electrified the audience by some very plain speaking about the present-day boy – his precocity in matters of sex, his distracted attention and all the vexing problems raised by his own indiscipline and the irresponsibility of his parents." One can only conjecture what had been going on at Hendon Lane to provoke such words or what Mr Pegrum might have been forced to say had he remained in situ during the Swinging 60s! His words were evidently controversial as the magazine adds that some three months later the "furore created in Finchley by his hard-hitting speech has not yet died down."

Much work was undertaken during Jubilee year to record the history of Christ's College and the Old Finchleians. A hardback Jubilee Book was produced, covering the fifty years of the Club for the princely sum of half a guinea (52½p) and a copy is available at the club for perusal by those who are interested. During the year many Finchleians responded to an appeal for copies of the school magazine 'The Finchleian', 'Dock Leaf' a satirical 'fanzine' produced semi-unofficially by CCF boys, Speech Day and Sports Day programmes and other literature documenting the history of CCF, including considerable material sent by WT Pollitz (1911-20) from Boston Massachusetts. Throughout the Fifties, OF activities were recorded in a section of 'The Finchleian' and this has been the major source for this book. A. Taylor 'Jock' Milne, (1916-24) an eminent historian who was OF magazine editor for 35 years until 1960 and was later to become Club President also began the compilation of a CCF Register 1857-1957 to mark the forthcoming centenary of the school. It would be interesting to know where this material now resides as it is a pity that a club that boasts such a long and proud history has been unable to maintain for posterity a comprehensive archive of the Old Finchleians.

The 'old' Clubhouse

Once the clubhouse and ground were secured, work began in earnest in the mid and late Fifties to raise the money necessary for a new, 'permanent' clubhouse to replace the much smaller 'temporary' building that stood on the sites of what is now the groundsman's store and cricket scorebox at the top of the ground. Many OFs will have fond memories of that simple but character-laden pavilion and not a few members that still frequent the bar first succumbed to the pleasures of cask conditioned ale within its precincts. Lager was for girlies in those days!

It was the original target to erect a brick-built pavilion

by the time of the Christ's College centenary in 1957. This required an estimated £7000 to be raised, a considerable sum at that time. Led by War Memorial Fund Secretary, Reg Mander, a further major appeal was launched in 1956 and in addition, the 'Shilling Fund' was established through which younger, more impecunious members could donate one shilling (5p) per week to the appeal. Among the OF merchandise produced to swell the Fund were ties in silk at 19s. 3d (97½p) or rayon at 12s. 6d (62½p), all wool lightweight sports scarves in OF colours at 17s. 6d (87½p) and blazer badges at 35s. (£1.75) available on a sale or return basis to members living outside London!

History of course records that due to protracted problems in securing the additional land on which the present clubhouse and car park now stand, and rapid inflation, the target date proved impossible to achieve. However much of the early planning that resulted in the facilities that we now enjoy was done at this time, including production of the first architect's blueprints for a new building and a plan to secure Southover as an open space in perpetuity. One can only stand in awe of the commitment and tenacity shown by Reg and his colleagues in the face of the seemingly intractable problems in bringing their dream to reality. Faced with this enormous task, in 1956 Reg decided to stand down as Club Secretary after 17 years dedicated service and it is testament to his workload that he was replaced by two joint secretaries and two assistant secretaries! To ease his burden or perhaps the task of finding his way home after a surfeit of Tolly Ale and malt whisky, in 1956 Reg bought 18 Southover, the house nearest the club, where he and Mary remained until his death. There was certainly no reluctance by the Manders to take their work home!

During the Fifties, there were certainly more activities than now at the Club but perhaps this is not surprising as it was the era before widespread entertainment opportunities existed and certainly before universal television. A full winter programme was organized between October and March each year including fortnightly 'socials' on a Saturday night. Unfortunately, the goings-on at these socials have not been documented for posterity but it is safe to assume that the lights burned late at Southover and that the odd 'tincture' was consumed from the barrels that stood on a shelf at the back of the bar at that time.

More varied Sunday night entertainment at Southover –
Keith Eldred baffles Neil Leslie, A. (Fred) Coldicott and Rupert Casson with his card tricks.

1954 Jubilee Beer Tent
Barman Gus Pugh serves Gerry Fitch with Terry Payne and Don Merritt looking on

1954 Jubilee at Southover
G.Wilson, D.Merritt, T.Payne, Les Long, D.Dew, D.Doe.

A range of other diversions supplemented the socials. Gordon Wilson and George Buist (1933/34) began the inter-section quizzes that ran so successfully on Winter Sunday nights for over twenty years and culminated each Spring in the most successful individual contestants competing for the accolade of 'Brain of the Club'. Individual and pairs darts tournaments took place annually as well as an inter-section darts competition for the Goss Shield. Other competitions included shove-halfpenny, bar skittles and Danish Skittles (don't ask!). A Sports Brains Trust was held in the clubhouse in 1957, panel members including one Jimmy Hill of Fulham FC. It is to be hoped that his knowledge of football then was greater than he later displayed as a TV pundit!

The incoming President held an annual reception,

which over the years metamorphosed into the Cheese and Wine Party. Bi-annual treasure hunts, often attended by over 100 people, were immensely popular events in which car crews followed clues round the Herts and Bucks countryside. In an era when car ownership was not the norm, this shows a degree of affluence among OF members. These were interrupted by petrol rationing during the 1956 Suez crisis and judging by contemporary reports of each event being punctuated by an excellent lunch at some hostelry or other, it is unsurprising that they seem to have petered out as the breathalyzer began to bite in later years! Despite this range of activities, the rather grandiose sounding Clubhouse Amenities Commission was established in 1956 with a view to expanding activities at the clubhouse. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the outcome of its deliberations is not recorded.

More varied sporting activities also occurred. The club had a lawn tennis section until it folded in 1960 and there was even talk of courts being provided at Southover. Lack of facilities did not stop the OFs producing top quality tennis players. R.K.'Bobby" Wilson (1947-54) was the Tim Henman of his day, British number one who among other things won the British Hard Court Championship, reached the last eight of the men's singles at Wimbledon and represented Britain in the Davis Cup for many years. JK Draper (1941-48) also qualified for Wimbledon in 1955 and Jack Baxter (1942-47) was winning OF titles in the early part of a career that has culminated in him becoming the pre-eminent British veteran player. There was another notable sporting achievement by an OF when Don Burgess (1944-49) followed his bronze medal at the Helsinki Olympics with a second bronze in the team pursuit cycling event at the 1956 Melbourne Games. The formation of a badminton section was canvassed but this seems to have been a flight of fancy that never got off the ground. There was still an OF inter-house relay on CCF Sports Day, although by 1960 it became increasingly difficult to find competitors and it was replaced by a race between the School, the masters and the OFs.

Inside the old clubhouse during the mid-fifties
Left to right:- David Lewis, Charlie Baker, Cyril Wearing, Keith Eldred, Ernie Ellis, Geoff Levy, Jeff Hutchison, Jack Baxter, Gerry Fitch, Steve Smalley (hidden), Brian Cosgrove, Denis Clark, Ronnie Baker.

December '56 Christmas Party
Don & Evelyn Merritt, Terry & Pam Payne, Jack Baxter, Taffy Evans.

In other fields, achievements by OFs in this period are too numerous to mention with the single exception of those of Sir James Paterson Ross (1906-12) physician to King George VI who was made President of the Royal College of Surgeons in 1958 and elevated to the Peerage as a Baronet in 1959. Can there have ever been a more eminent Old Finchleian?

On a lighter note in 1959 Dr. H.R. Ambler (1913-18) was appointed Chief Scientific Adviser to the High Commissioner for India with the brief to further the exchange of information between British and Indian scientists. This caused humorous magazine 'Punch' to comment that if India was to get the H Bomb, Britain should at least insist on getting the Indian rope trick! And in 1956, R.A. Piddington, occasional Daily Telegraph writer and author of the OF war memorial inscription published a book entitled 'The Limits of Mankind' dealing with the problem of overpopulation. Part of his evidence that mankind was too numerous was not a shortage of food but that people had to queue for two hours to see the Crown Jewels at the Tower of London!

The black tie Annual Ball, organized by Ken Wylie (1923-28) continued throughout the Fifties but in 1960 moved from the Hendon Hall Hotel to the Prince Albert Hotel in Golders Green when numbers dwindled as fewer of the younger OFs attended. The Finchleian magazine of the time lamented that, 'It seems that the day when a dinner jacket was as much a part of an Old Finchleian's wardrobe as a football shirt or cricket flannels has regrettably passed.' The generation gap was obviously alive and well!

The activities surrounding the CCF Centenary in 1957 gave a further fillip to Old Finchleians membership, which rose to over 800, generating record subscriptions and boosting the War Memorial Fund. A record number of OFs and guests attended the Annual Dinner at the Connaught Rooms and the aforementioned A. Taylor 'Jock' Milne produced an excellent CCF Centenary Book, this time costing one whole guinea (£1.05p). But danger

was afoot! Within a year Finchley Borough Council had published an education plan that foresaw the reduction of CCF to a two-stream entry that might reduce further to one when Hendon Borough Council opened its planned new schools. Had this occurred, it would undoubtedly have been a death sentence for CCF and in the longer term for the Club and after widespread protests by staff, OFs, parents and others, the proposal was quietly dropped.

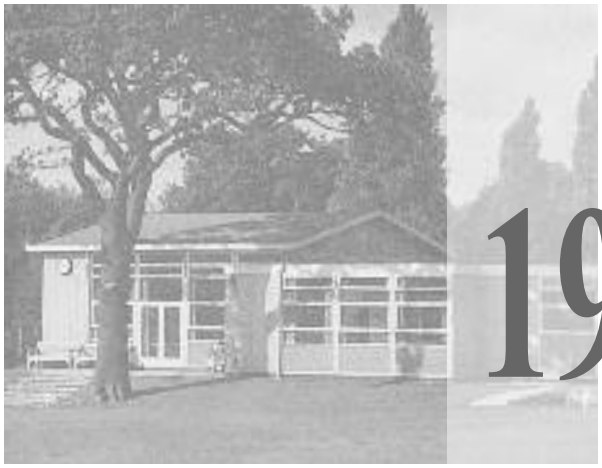
The mid-fifties saw the deaths of two of the 'great' CCF masters from the first half of the Twentieth Century. In 1954 the death occurred of Sewell Allenby who taught at the school between 1903 and 1930 when he became headmaster of the new Drayton Park Grammar School. 1955 brought the death of an even greater servant with the passing of Alfred 'Kangar' Millea MA, an Irishman who joined CCF in 1904 and taught English and Latin for over 40 years. He was Acting Headmaster during World War II when Herbert Pegrum was on active service and retired when 'Peggy' returned. His nickname derived from his apparent similarity to a kangaroo caused by a small head, stooping gait and propensity to wear long brown overcoats. Though only temporary in the role he has a rightful place in the Pantheon of great CCF Headmasters. 1956 brought the retirement of a long-serving and much loved mathematics master, O.J. 'Olly' Chamberlain after 36 years service, the last six as Senior Master. Among his many attributes was his skill in handicapping the Old Boys Sprint on Sports Day, although there is no record of how this was accomplished!

This period draws to a close with the retirement of Herbert Pegrum as CCF Headmaster in July 1960 and the appointment of his successor Kenneth James. So much has been written of 'Peggy' elsewhere that it is unnecessary to repeat it in detail here. Appointed as Headmaster in succession to the legendary John Tindall Phillipson in 1929, he became synonymous with Christ's College to generations of boys who came under his wing. A kind man of the very highest principle he led CCF with distinction for over 30 years, his term of office punctuated only by war service during which he was awarded the Military Cross. He was always a great friend of the Old Finchleians and an enthusiastic Honorary Member of the club. He did much to nurture an excellent relationship between the School and the Club and was honoured by the OFs at the 1960 Annual Dinner by being our 1962/63 President. Not surprisingly as guest of honour at the dinner, he attracted a record attendance and responded to the fulsome praise he received with customary humility. Peggy's service-long Secretary Nora Beal retired at the same time as he after over 40 years at CCF and after his first wife died all Finchleians were delighted when Nora became the second Mrs Pegrum.

Mr V. Usher a member of the Governing Body of Finchley Schools, President of Old Woodhouseians and later Mayor of Barnet was among the speakers at the 1960 dinner. He said that 'Old Woods, along with other old scholars associations in Finchley, looked to the Old Finchleians as the premier old scholars club in the district in age, wisdom and achievement.' As is said earlier, some things never change!

I.C.B.

CHAPTER 3:



1961-1974

The Sixties will be remembered as a time of innovation, experiment, sexual liberation and cultural development. Although events at the Old Finchleians' Club may not quite have matched the social revolution of the times, the period was nevertheless one of significance and change at Southover. The decade was ushered in by important administrative and communication changes, was dominated by the planning, financing and construction of the Memorial Clubhouse and departed on a note of uncertainty as merger proposals involving the School gave rise to controversy. Amidst all the change, life at Southover continued in much the same way with a fair degree of success on the sporting field and dramatic achievements on the stage as well as a steady expansion of CRA activities.

Over a cup of tea in the Headmaster's study on a sunny evening in 1961, it was decided to revive the 'Old Finchleian' magazine. First published in 1884 by the original OF Club, it had been absorbed some fourteen years later into 'The Finchleian' School magazine. The advantages of having a separate School and Club magazine with issues suitably staggered throughout the year were plain and under the enterprising editorship of Graham Blacktop, the 'Old Finchleian' in no small way helped to expand membership and the dissemination of news and information.

The first issue of the revived 'Old Finchleian' appeared in May 1962 and coincided with a reorganisation in the secretarial department of the Club. After 20 years as Club Secretary, Gordon Wilson stood down. Before his retirement he had filled so may administrative positions from co-founder and secretary of the table tennis section in 1934 to Box Office Manager of the OFDS; from 2nd XI cricket captain to secretary of the Ground Committee. A measure of the time and energy which he devoted to the task of Club Secretary is that Gordon's departure prompted a major upheaval with Alan Duke taking over as Secretary assisted by four Assistant Secretaries – Dicky Allan, Fred Honey, Trevor Hurford and John Richardson-Hill with responsibilities for membership, committee meetings and agendas, publications and sale of Club badges and ties etc (town tie 15/6d, sports tie 11/9d, tobacco pouch 16/6d!)

Any doubts about the success of the new regime in the next few years were dispelled when Alan Duke was able to inform the 1965 AGM that Club membership stood at 900 which was an all time high. There hardly seemed a part of the globe where Old Boys had not laid down permanent roots or where work had temporarily taken them. The 'Old Finchleian' faithfully recorded the activities of members who were exporting tea from Calcutta and tobacco from Kenya; working in hospitals in India or doing voluntary service in Malawi; in colonial service in Nigeria, advising the International Labour Organisation in Malaysia or working for the Customs & Excise in Rhodesia; helping with a space project in Australia and translating in Brazil; surveying in Hong Kong or auditing in Liberia; with the forces in Germany, Swaziland and Resolution Island. Even the Football Club Secretary got married in Wales! Christmas cards arrived at Southover from New Zealand, the Phillipines, South Africa, USA, Canada and Singapore. All, of course, had one thing in common – a lasting affection for a Club which was undoubtedly expanding and which had even grander ambitions for the foreseeable future.

It will be recalled that the War Memorial Fund had been formally instituted in 1949 to commemorate the 200 Old Boys of CCF who fell in the two World Wars. The fund had three principal objectives. The first was a Memorial Tablet which had been unveiled at the School hall on Remembrance Sunday in 1949. The second was the outright purchase of the ground at Southover which had been achieved in 1954. Its dedication as a War Memorial had been made by the Rev Matthews, Rector of St Mary's Finchley the following year. The third was the purchase of some more land and the erection of a

Memorial Clubhouse to replace the temporary structure which, although regarded with much fondness by visitors to Southover, was clearly unsuitable as a permanent memorial which could be fully utilised in the future.

The fulfilment of the latter objective had proved troublesome in the extreme and had caused a certain amount of controversy. Some Old Boys questioned whether a Memorial Clubhouse was a fitting memorial to their fallen friends and colleagues but a Special General Meeting of the Club had decided overwhelmingly that it was and, in the words of the Rev Matthews 'how happy that a memorial to friends should be a place for living and not a place of reserved and forbidden ground'.

Steps to acquire additional land for the new building had begun in the late 1950s but the legalities had caused difficulty. At one stage, the problems had seemed insurmountable and a committee had been set up to enquire into the possibility of building elsewhere but at last in 1963 the drawn-out negotiations were concluded and the necessary land obtained. This was not before much work had already been done on a planning application for a number of sites around the existing playing area at Southover which, it turned out, would not have been approved in any event.

The next stage of the project was the appointment of a Planning Committee to decide what sort of clubhouse would best meet present and future requirements and then to engage an architect to draw up the plans. Now all that was necessary was to raise the necessary funds to pay for it! The estimated cost was in the region of £24,000. The Memorial Fund already stood at £3,450 and a further £3/4,000 was expected from the sale of the groundsman's house which was owned by the Old Finchleians. It was clear, however, that a considerable amount of goodwill and funds of a more material nature was going to be required when Reg Mander launched the Memorial Clubhouse Appeal in September 1964.

Within three months 139 members had contributed just over £5,000 and the appeal was well under way with the hope that the remaining 700 members would give as generously. By May of 1965 the fund had swollen to £15,000 and the AGM was able to pass the following resolution without dissent: 'that we go ahead at once with the plans for the building of a new Clubhouse'. Reg Mander announced to an enthusiastic meeting that once the first bricks were laid, he was confident that others would contribute the £9/10,000 shortfall.

In the next few weeks the bulldozers moved into the wedge-shaped, overgrown area between the old gate and the existing temporary structure and started clearing the land over which years of wrangling had taken place. Ditches were filled, drainage channels were dug and in early 1966 the foundations were laid (despite further obstacles presented by recent changes in local government and the GLC).

Reg's confidence in his fellow OFs was not misplaced and soon the fund was up to £17,000 with over 600 members having contributed in one way or another. This total included a loan of £5,000 obtained from the Football Association on satisfactory terms and a further £1,000 from the National Playing Fields Association but there was still a note of caution as many members felt that building should not commence until all the required money had been collected. A number of fund raising activities in the form of dances and raffles was organised but one of the more unusual events was an evening billed as the 'Carnival of Entertaining Mystery' where Peter Warlock, Vice President of the Magic Circle and a former CCF pupil, gathered together no less than nine top line magicians, all of whom gave their services free. Over 200 OFs and their families and friends thoroughly enjoyed the evening which raised £250 for the Fund.

In the meantime, tentative plans prepared by the Design and Planning Committee were submitted to an architect for costing as a preamble to tender. The committee, under the chairmanship of Alec Buist and with John Friend as Secretary had laboured for long hours through despair, disappointment and delay but their hard work was rewarded when their initial estimates were found to be not too far from the mark. Some pruning of ideas was necessary but after further consultation with the architect and quantity surveyor, plans were sent out to six firms for tender in the early weeks of 1967. When the replies were opened, the prices varied between £26,000 and £23,500 but the lowest four were within £800 of each other. After a final revision, a Special General Meeting on 21 March 1967 attended by over 60 members passed the following resolution:

> 'That this Special General Meeting of the Old Finchleians Club authorises the signature of a contract to value not exceeding £20,000 for the construction of the proposed new clubhouse and amenities, it being further understood and agreed that an additional expenditure of approximately £3,000 will be incurred for work, materials and charges supplemental to the main contract'.

Work on the clubhouse, which would incorporate a groundsman's flat, commenced early in May 1967. There then followed weeks of urgent activity as the new building emerged. A cricketer fielding on the boundary near the oak tree may have been disturbed by the sound of a cement mixer and in October and November footballers had to rough it when the hot water system was removed from the old clubhouse and use had to be made of two old enamel baths and some gas holders at the back. Tea ladies opening the back door as dusk settled over Southover did so at their peril!

By 16 December 1967 all the waiting and discomfort was over and the new Memorial Clubhouse opened its doors for the first time to an excited crowd of around 400 members, wives and families. First impressions of the new premises were somewhat rhetorically described in the 'Old Finchleian' as:

'A moonlit patio under the bare oak branches, through an

OLD FINCHLEIANS MEMORIAL CLUBHOUSE

Following some preliminary work, an Outline Planning Application was submitted on 3rd October 1962 and, in February 1963, OF Sections were invited to make comments on the proposal to build a new Memorial Clubhouse. Detailed responses were received from the OF Dramatic Society and the CRA.

At the OF AGM on 23rd April 1963 it was proposed by the CRA, and carried that:

"This meeting elects a Clubhouse Design and Building Committee …….. their function being to investigate, plan and submit proposals for the siting, design and costing for the new Memorial Clubhouse. The Committee …… shall submit their final proposals …not later than the 30th September 1963".

The following were elected to that committee: Alec Buist (Chair), Trevor Hurford (Hon Sec), Len Clark, John Follis, John Friend, Brian Fuller, and Tod Jennings and the committee first met on 16 May.

The committee co-opted young architect, John Fuller, to assist them in the drawing up of the plans to illustrate the various aspects of the proposals and, following seven meetings, the proposals were narrowed down to two schemes, both 'cedar clad' which were identified as the Field Entrance Plan and the Road Entrance Plan. Enlarged copies of these plans were displayed and referred back to the Council on 10 March 1964.

At subsequent meetings a draft specification was drawn up and two architectural firms invited to tender for the work, the Field Entrance scheme having been preferred.

The work was awarded to architects, Challen & Floyd and an initial meeting to agree their brief was held on 28 May, it being aimed to commence construction in April 1965.

In September 1964 an Appeal Letter signed by Reg Mander and Rupert Casson, was distributed to Old Finchleians inviting them to contribute towards the anticipated cost of £24,000. Over the next two years this appeal raised all but £6000 necessary to enable the contract to be let.

In November 1966 approval was finally received to the disposal of sewage to the main sewer – the final hurdle.

Following a Special Annual General Meeting on 21 March 1967, to approve the signing of the contract, it was let in March 1967.

Work commenced and proceeded according to schedule and in July 1967 it was questioned whether, as the original Clubhouse and Ground had already been dedicated, it was necessary to have a further dedication. Therefore a Grand Opening Night and Christmas Party was planned for 16 December 1967.

entrance lobby (crying out for some potted greenery) into a spacious room; white walls tinted red from modern hanging lampshades, parquet floor inviting dancers or accepting tea tables. The parquet stretches, no, leads one to the handsome bar, right side flanked by neatly carpeted lounge alcove, low tables, low blue carpeted settees and matching cosy chairs. Bar side dexter and ladies powder room, pink and grey décor (they say) passage leading to ample dressing rooms, showers, plunge bath, toilets'.

With the exception of the borrowed £6,000 which would, of course, have to be repaid in the months to come, the cost of the clubhouse had been met by donations from Old Finchleians, some of whom had not visited Southover for years, if at all. An immense debt of gratitude is owed to their generosity which has enabled successive generations of OFs to enjoy the facilities that became the envy of many a visitor to Southover. Who would argue that it was not a fitting memorial to those who had lost their lives in service to their country? The contribution of three members, however, require particular mention. Alec Buist and John Friend had together undertaken much of the planning and overseeing of the progress of the building and Reg Mander, in his capacity as Secretary of the War Memorial Fund, had played a major part in funding arrangements. Without their determined and sustained efforts, the project may well have ended in failure.

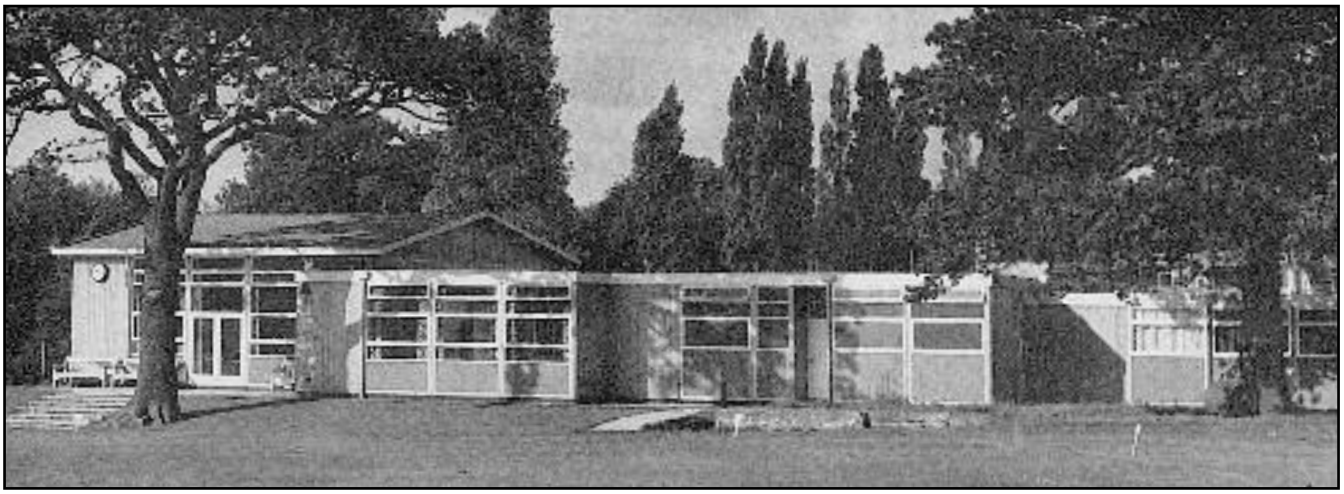
While the plans and eventual construction of the Clubhouse dominated much of the Sixties, other activities by no means ceased. In 1962 the March Annual Ball, characterised by its formal evening dress, was replaced by a dance where only lounge suits were required. This change found favour with the younger generation but the black and white tie brigade voted with their feet and stayed away. In 1966 an inaugural Finchleians Economics Dinner was held, with Dr Bather, the deputy head of CCF in the chair, and this proved successful enough for it to feature in the calendar of events for a few years. During the winter months, lights could be seen burning brightly at Southover as battle lines were drawn in the preliminaries to the 'Brain of the Club' Quiz where the Pegrum Cup was hotly contested in the Spring finals.

Car treasure hunts were another popular social activity at this time and twice a year car loads of OFs and their families were to be found scouring the countryside of Herts, Bucks, Beds and Essex in search of obscure clues and places. The event often seemed to attract weather which did its best to ruin the occasion but nothing could deter the contestants and the willing band of helpers manning check points. While some clues were missed and wrong turns made, everyone was able to find their way back to Southover in good time to celebrate or commiserate.

Memorial Day provided another opportunity for members and their families to get together. It had been instigated with the idea of setting aside one day in the year when the sportsfield at Southover could become home to a social gathering. Sideshows, the CCF band and other attractions usually combined to make it a successful day, thus justifying the hard work put in by the organising committee.

On the debit side, Graham Blacktop announced in 1967 that he would no longer be available to edit the Old Finchleian and The Finchleian, the School magazine. Graham had made a great success of the job during his eight years as editor and his resignation created something of a void for several months until Trevor Gash agreed to take over. Trevor always had an uphill task in following such a successful editor but he kept the magazine on an even keel despite a dearth of contributors, until he had to resign the editorship in 1973. Not surprisingly, there was no rush of volunteers to take over and it was left to the Secretary, Alan Duke, to keep the magazine alive.

In 1968 Ken Wylie decided not to stand for re-election as Club Treasurer, a post he had filled for some twenty years. His contribution to the financial well-being of the Club had been immense and it was fortunate that one so experienced in financial affairs, Geoffrey Levy, agreed to fill the vacancy. Twelve months later Gordon Smith retired from the post of auditor after over twenty years service in which he had been a tower of strength. For the next year John Pike would join Len



The new Memorial Clubhouse

Brittain in the Treasurer's department and Barry Coleman would take over twelve months later.

The annual dinner was a highlight of the year for many Old Boys when they were able to enjoy and evening of conviviality and reminiscing. Each year between 150 and 180 Old Boys sat down to dinner at the Connaught Rooms in Holborn where they were richly entertained by speakers from their ranks and those from the School who kept them up to date with events at CCF and Southover. The only hiccup came in 1964 when the length of the speeches left little time for socialising so that the following year the number of speeches was reduced by one and their content was praised not only for the quality but also for their brevity.

The dinner was an important means of contact with CCF and links with some former masters remained strong. In June 1964 the Club paid tribute at the Dinner to the retiring Henry Turl who was leaving after 43 years at CCF – a record unlikely to be broken. He arrived at the school in 1921 as a graduate in mathematics and later also graduated in economics and law and was called to the bar. He also had a distinguished war record but despite all these achievements, his vocation was teaching and when he retired the school lost a distinguished deputy head and a schoolmaster who had played an important part in the formative years of many OFs.

In 1965 Old Boys bade farewell to two popular and long-serving masters at CCF Any boy at the school between 1930 and 1963 will surely never forget Montagu Albert Victor de la Pumfrey. He was Harold Pegrum's first appointment as headmaster and in the ensuing 30 years 'Monty' became something of a legend at the school. His presence in the gymnasium and on the sportsfield was such an integral part of physical education at the school that it was with great sadness that a sudden and unexpected heart attack in March 1965 allowed him less than two years retirement.

Three months later news arrived of the death of J. Clay Jenkins in New Zealand. 'Jenks' had joined the staff of CCF in 1920 and for the next thirty years commanded the respect of chemistry pupils as well as colleagues whom he represented on a number of teaching committees. Shortly after his wife's death, 'Jenks' retired in 1950 to live in Australia but he later re-married and moved to Otago. He kept in touch with former colleagues and events at Southover and his passing was sadly noted by many Old Boys.

The deaths of four former Presidents were also recorded during the 1960s. Stanley Bothwell passed away in 1963. He had been President in 1939 and because he was unfit for military service during the war, fate decreed that he should continue in the post until 1945. This was no easy task in a record period as president and he had a great share in the negotiations which resulted in the buying of the sportsground at Southover.

Leonard Brook, President of the Club in 1934 died in January 1964. He fought in both wars and despite being wounded in the arm was able to play a sound game of golf with an artificial support and his name often appeared in the prize lists of the OF's Golfing Society.

In April 1967 the death occurred of the oldest serving President, Arthur Forbes. He was President during 1913/4 before serving in the First World War as a Staff Captain where he was mentioned in dispatches. In 1941 he was appointed a Judge and, as far as was known, he was the first Old Finchleian to reach the English bench. Three years later, another former President died peacefully in his late 70's. A R 'Bertie' Bothwell was President during 1927/8 and his golfing prowess and assistance with the OFDS and general all-round contribution to the Club, made him a greatly respected and much loved Old Finchleian.

A record of the passing at this time of notable Old Fincheians would not be complete without reference to Kenneth Elbourne. Although never a President, he was not only active in the Club football section but was also chairman of the Southern Olympian League. The respect and affection in which he was held led to the establishment of the K.B. Elbourne trophy for which SOL clubs aspired by virtue of good behaviour on the field of play.

Mention of the OF's football section provides a reminder that it was back in 1895 that CCF switched from rugby to soccer. The legacy of CCF rugby nevertheless lived on as C.J.Munro (CCF 1867-9) returned to his native New Zealand in 1870 and introduced rugby football to that country. He is officially acknowledged as the 'father' of the All Blacks and in 1968 two members of the All Blacks visited CCF, anxious to see the school from where the game was introduced. They took home with them copies of the School Centenary Book and an appreciative letter was received from the surviving son of C.J.Munro. Interestingly, four years earlier an Old Finchleian in the shape of Surgeon-Lieut P. Golding was full-back in a Combined Universities side which played against the visiting All Blacks.

The Sixties had been heralded by some changes in the administration which had effectively seen the Club through the difficult years of the planning and construction of the new clubhouse. In 1968 a sub-committee, set up to see whether changes were needed in order to ensure that the new clubhouse was run efficiently, reported its findings. As a result, a number of proposals were made which were later adopted by the AGM. Broadly speaking, the Club would be run by a Council consisting of elected members and past presidents, supported by two committees, the Finchleian Committee and the Southover Committee. The Council would deal with matters of general policy which did not fall to the committees and matters upon which the committees required a ruling. The Finchleian Committee under the chairmanship of Douglas Cope, would deal with day-to-day matters concerning the Club outside Southover such as membership, magazine, school liaison and the annual dinner. The Southover Committee, with John Follis in the chair would, as the name implied, be responsible for the running of the clubhouse and

ground.

These changes were prompted in part by the feeling in some quarters that things had gone a little flat after the excitement of the opening of the new clubhouse. That is not to say that all was quiet on the social scene as a number of events were held, including dances both of the modern and square variety (under the able guidance of Taffy Evans), bingo evenings organised by the ladies, competitions (in addition to the ever-popular Brain of the Club quiz) and indoor sports tournaments such as darts, bar billiards and table football. These were quite well-attended but on a winter evening when no function was organised, the number of OFs in the clubhouse barely exceeded the number who used to be in the old 'hut'. Furthermore, most of those were the old stalwarts who had been propping up the bar in the old days. The solvency of the Club depended upon its being utilised to the full and it was hoped that the new committees could fully exploit the potential of the clubhouse and have a push towards increasing membership. The question of future membership of the Old Finchleians was indeed a topic of much concern at this time primarily because of the proposed amalgamation of CCF and Alder School.

Views on the merits and disadvantages of comprehensive education were divided, none more so than by those Old Finchleians who had taken up teaching as a profession and who could be heard voicing their disagreements over a glass or two at Southover. It would serve no purpose to rehearse those arguments here as, whatever the pros and cons, amalgamation of the schools became inevitable despite the fact that there was a strong anti-merger campaign and that the Parents Association sought advice over the possibility of legal action under the Education Act 1944. Discussions with the London Borough of Barnet and Margaret Thatcher, who was appointed Minister for Science and Education following the Conservative party victory in the General election, succeeded in delaying the merger until a new purpose built building could be erected. The whole position was fraught and worrying but an additional question for the Old Boys was how would the issue affect the Club?

The debate which took place in the early years of the Seventies provided an interesting insight to potential problems that may seem trivial today but were matters of real concern at the time. Firstly, there was likely to be a six form entry as compared with the present three form entry so in time, the Club could see a doubling of school leavers applying to join the Club. Secondly, as most pupils leaving CCF applied to join the Club at seventeen or eighteen, in time applications could be received from sixteen year olds as more pupils from the merged schools could be leaving at that age. Undoubtedly, the Club would have to prepare for a younger generation at Southover and the possibility of a youth club atmosphere on Saturday nights did not sit comfortably with the older generation. There was also the problem that a minimum entry to the Club would be two years below the minimum age for the consumption of alcohol.

More members would mean a boost for finances and, undoubtedly, the football and cricket sections would be likely to benefit from an injection of younger players. But, it was asked, as well as age would the arrival of comprehensive education see a different type of new member? It was recognised that an Old Boys Club must cater for the 'modern' side of the School as well as the 'grammar' side but it was essential that standards and traditions should be maintained. How many of these hopes and fears would be realised must wait for the time being. For the present there was, arguably, an even more important and far-reaching change that was imminent.

In November 1971 a Special General Meeting was held to discuss amendments to Club Rules proposed by the Council with the object of enabling up to 50 relatives and close friends of Old Finchleians to be admitted as Associate Members. A memorandum setting out the advantages and disadvantages of such a course had been circulated to members but considering the important matter of principle involved, the meeting was poorly attended. A few members had replied in writing and others had made oral representations to the Secretary but only one of those who had written objected in principle. At the meeting the proposal was approved by an overwhelming majority and for the first time since its establishment, the Old Finchleians Club had opened its doors to persons who were not former pupils of CCF or masters at the School. Associate Members were not eligible to sit on the Council and could not vote at General Meetings but the Club had taken a decisive step in deciding the path it was to follow.

It was, of course, inevitable that as the Club welcomed and encouraged new members, the passage of time and ill-health would see the departure of others who would long be remembered by Old Finchleians. The sudden death in 1972 of Gordon Goodwin while on holiday in Cyprus came as a shock to his many friends. He had been President in 1966 and had had much to do with the preparations for the new clubhouse. After it was opened he was chairman of the Social sub-committee which laid the foundations for many of the events enjoyed by so many at the Club.

Two long-serving schoolmasters, Donald Watterson and Oliver 'Ollie' Chamberlain also passed away in 1971 and 1972 respectively. Donald spent 38 years at CCF and loyally attended all School and many Old Boys' functions. He will perhaps best be remembered for his work with the Cadet movement for which we was awarded the MBE in 1954, and his association with the Club Centarian Regimental Association. Ollie Chamberlain served the School with unswerving devotion for 36 years and was fondly remembered by generations of boys to whom he taught English and Mathematics.

J.N.

CHAPTER 4:

1975-1984

Much of the period in the Club's history that I have been asked to write about coincided with the eighteen years when I was newsletter editor. Despite the demise (about which you will read elsewhere) of two once flourishing sections of the Club, the dramatic society and the table-tennis section, we had by this time the enormous advantage of our new, spacious clubhouse which had opened in 1967. Suddenly there was room for dances, a modern kitchen for functions and more space for George Buist's and Gordon Wilson's Sunday evening quizzes which were a feature of the time along with Mary Mander's bingo sessions. Added to this was the much-needed revenue from lettings. Outdoors there used to be an annual summer fete and cricket week together with the football sixes which are still a feature of our calendar.

The annual dinner switched in 1976 from the Connaught Rooms to the 'Three Horseshoes', Tottenham Court Road (largely I suspect, because of the cost) but when that venue closed down for structural alterations and re-decoration – and not before time, some of us thought – what better alternative location than our own Southover? It is there, apart from certain very special occasions when we anticipated a huge turnout and which will be recorded elsewhere, that the dinner has continued to be held. Obviously our not being in central London was less convenient for some but one heard of OFs staying overnight with friends or relatives and it didn't seem to have any adverse effect on the faithful.

Sadly within just over a decade we saw the passing of nearly all those OF stalwarts, some of whom had been instrumental immediately after the war in our purchase of our sportsfield and the erection of the original clubhouse. In 1975 I had to print obituaries to Alec Buist and Leslie Hodge, in '79 I lost a personal friend in Denis Wakefield; in 1980 "Charlie" Baker went. None of these men, by any stretch of the imagination, could be called old: all of them passed away in their sixties (or in Denis's case even earlier).

In 1983 Reg Mander died at the age of 83, the man I called "Mr. Southover", the man whose vision created our ground and clubhouse. The following year Gordon Bryson left us and in 1985 Gordon Wilson who, including his time as joint secretary with Alan Duke, had served in that capacity for twenty years.

There are many others one could mention who served the Club faithfully – Wylie, George Buist, Dew, Cope and more too numerous to mention – but when in 1993 we lost Alan Duke it was the end of an era. If I may include a personal reminiscence, having been an OF for just over half a century, I can say in all sincerity that I knew every one of these men and am pleased to have made their aquaintance.

Fortunately John Bowra had taken over the secretaryship in 1984 – and what a stroke of good fortune for the Club – and fortunately also a new generation of hard-working OFs sprang up to occupy the vacancies. Whereas in the past the Club was run largely by bachelors who worked to live and lived for the Club, their replacements are mainly family men who have, presumably, very understanding wives.

R.J.J. MANDER (CCF 1911-17)
Earlier this year the Club was deeply shocked and saddened to hear of the death of it's greatest ever stalwart. With the passing of Reg Mander a vacuum has been created among the dignitaries of the Club that can never be filled; yet beacause Reg *was* "Mr. Southover," the man whose vision saw the purchase of our own ground and the creation of our new clubhouse, he can never be forgotten.

One of the most difficult tasks of your editor, in

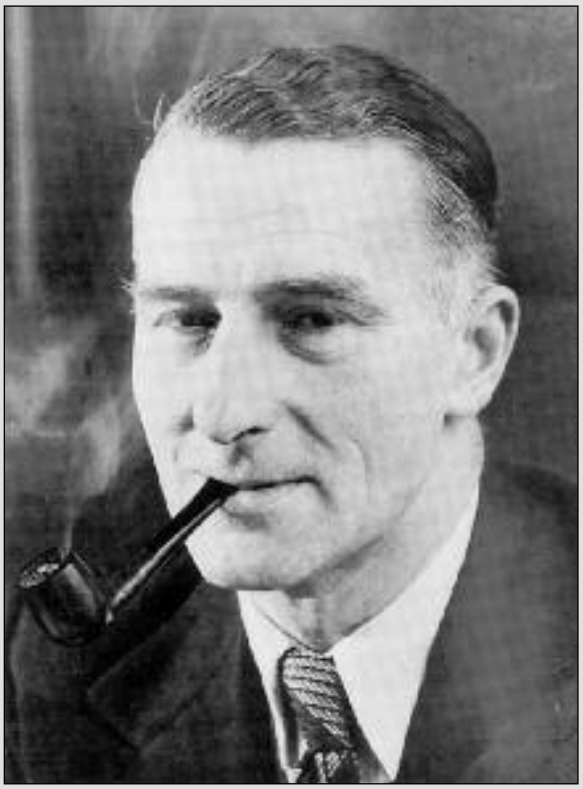
which he is always suitably advised by the Secretary, is to find the right person to pay his last respects on behalf of us all. In Reg's case no one man felt sufficiently confident to say all that needed to be said.

Through a contact of Gordon Wilson's I managed to speak over the telephone to Vic Brown (CCF 1915-18) who remembers Reg from CCF days, and though younger, played football in the school 1st XI with him and described him as a brilliant inside forward. He also recalls running in the mile which Reg won, and Reg's organising a quite spontaneuos football match at the CCF cadet camp at Aldermaston in, possibly, 1917. Then in 1924 Vic played alongside Reg in the Old Boys' cup final at Crystal Palace. We know that Reg was a player of no mean ability when we remember that for many seasons he played for one of the greatest amateur sides of all time, Corinthian Casuals.

Gordon Wilson says: "What I remember most about Reg in pre-second World war days was his year of Presidency (1937/8) which was an example to all of us of how to put heart and soul into a job; it was a magnificent year and included a ball at which one of the famous 'Big Bands' of the day played. Then there was a party he gave in the West End to which I, as a young OF already showing signs of interest in many aspects of the Club, had the pleasure to be invited."

Primarily Reg will be remembered by most within the Club for three dominating passions: first, when the Club lost its entire secretarial department when war was declared in 1939, he saw it as his duty to keep members in touch with the Club and its members in the Forces by means of a regular news-letter, sent all over the world wherever OFs were serving. It was a great success and was the prime reason for the Club being able to get on its feet again sucessfully when the war was over.

Secondly he had a vision that nothing much else mattered except his concept that the Club must have its own ground and a clubhouse worthy of those from CCF who died in two world wars. At the end of the war it was Reg who led a small team who bought Southover and who campaigned for years for the necessary funds to complete the enterprise. (Remember the 'shilling a week' fund?). I'm sure, too, that Reg was well to the forefront when gangs of volunteers were needed to erect the old wooden clubhouse which even then, was a temporary measure until a grand new clubhouse could take its place. All this he saw come to fruition in 1967. Gordon says, "He was not always an easy man to work with,



dominated as he was by his intense determination to succeed in his mission – perhaps there was a vague touch of Churchill in his make up."

Finally there was his devotion to football. In the last football section news-letter of the season, Geoff Owen has written: "It would be impossible for me in the space available to describe adequately the contribution made to the Old Finchleians football club during his life. When I joined the club in 1950 I knew of his playing skills only by reputation. This however convinced me that he was a player of high class and both with Corinthian Casuals and with the Old Finchleians he performed with distinction.

During the 1950s he became very closely associated with the OF 1st XI, a link which he maintained right up to his death. In those days he personally paid for professional pre-season coaching which brought the likes of Danny Blanchflower and Jimmy Hill to Southover. Reg also donated a cup to the Southern Olympian League for 4th XI Competition which became known as the Mander Cup, and he was the donor of our own splendid Sixes Cup.

Reg's acts of generosity were a feature of his life and the opening of our new clubhouse at Southover was the culmination of all his years of effort. The popularity of Reg Mander with the Old Finchleian footballers was shown by the large contingent who

attended his funeral at Hendon on the 8th April".

One cannot of course pay tribute to Reg without thinking also of Mary to whom we send our deepest condolences. Mary's very active involvement with the Club has spanned many years - who can forget her ladies' working parties, football club teas, her bingo evenings, her familiar white elephant stalls at summer fetes? It really goes without saying to express the wish that Mary will continue to visit Southover whenever she pleases.

Your editor recalls one little anecdote when I was playing my first season for the football section, having only recently left school. I was introduced to the great Reg Mander who promptly invited me to have a drink with him . I asked for half of bitter. "Half!" he exclaimed. "You'll have a pint. We don't deal in halves." In a way it was typical of the man, for nothing that Reg did was done by halves.

C.D.R.B.

Alas also in my time as editor, we came to hear of the death of Harold Pegrum, Headmaster of Christ's College from 1929-60. Peter Green's eloquent appraisal of this extraordinary man is re-printed below.

"PEGGY" (CCF 1929-60)

Harold Benjamin Pegrum ("Peggy"), Headmaster of CCF 1929-60, died on 7th November, 1983. Although in his ninetieth year, news of his death still came as a shock. His energy, especially in the face of increasing ill-health, remained remarkable and his sense of loyalty and duty continued unabated. Others like me, must have begun to feel, in a strange irrational way, that he would always be with us, as year in, year out he attended functions with unfailing regularity.

CCF has had only four Headmasters over the last 88 years and when the "3 line whip" was obeyed, as has so often been the case at recent Old Finchleian functions, three of those Headmasters have paraded representing the guiding hands of the college for over 50 years. What a link with the past! A link made more vivid when it is noted that new boys in Peggy's first term are now beyond statutory retiring age.

My sentimentality catches up with me again when I feel that such a situation could only have applied to Christ's College Finchley.

Peggy was born on 13th October, 1894 and attended Skinners' Company's school at Tunbridge Wells from 1904 until 1910 when he won a skinners' Scholarship to Tonbridge school, moving on from that famous public school to London University in 1913 to read French.

Not surprisingly, with war clouds looming, he also joined the university OTC and was at camp on Salisbury Plain when war was declared the following August. He immediately applied for a commission, being gazetted 2/Lt in 9 Bn. Lancashire Fusiliers in November. The Battalion sailed as part of 11 Division to Alexandria in July 1915 and landed at Suvla Bay on the Gallipoli Peninsula, where he was badly wounded and shipped back to the UK, to the Royal Free Hospital , then in Grays Inn Road. He was only one of five officers in his battalion to survive the Gallipoli debacle.

Once fit, Peggy was drafted to 10 Bn. Lancashire Fusiliers in France. They were engaged in the Battle of the Somme and we can read into the history of this regiment that Lt. Pegrum took command of 'C' Coy. and later that all of two battalions had been forced to withdraw except 2 companies under Capt. Pegrum, which held on till morning. Over 400 of his battalion were killed or wounded in three days.

For two more years he remained with the battalion, being mentioned in despatches and then gazetted MC on 1st January 1918. Regrettably, no citation exists. In February 1918, "with Capt. H.B. Pegrum MC in temporary command, 10 Bn. claimed an aeroplane to itself with machine gun fire." For the last few months of the war he was G.S.O. III to 5th Army Corps.

As a very lucky survivor of that dreadful war, Peggy resumed his studies but at Lincoln College. Oxford, where he read Modern Languages, taking his BA in 1921 followed by a year studying education. At cricket, too, he excelled, playing both for his college and The Authentics.

In 1922 he joined the staff of Mill Hill School, where he remained until his appointment to CCF. Two quotations from "The Mill Hill Magazine" July 1929, reprinted in "The Finchleian" amply testify to his achievements;

"He took over the school cricket in the following summer, and the OTC early in 1924 and became Housemaster of Winterstoke house in May 1927. Besides this he has taken a very active part helping with Junior and Senior Rugby sets. To those of us who know him well, the amount of work and organisation he has done has been little short of miraculous. Anything he takes up he does with a precision and thoroughness that appal those who have to follow in his footsteps. When one considers the amount he gets through in one day, one no longer is surprised at the rapid pace at which he dashes all day long between the the Orderly Room, Winterstoke House, the Cricket pavilion and Classroom B. At Mill Hill, he has devoted the whole of his time to the school; he never takes time off, and during the twenty one terms that he has been here it is true to say that he has probably not been off the school premises for his own purposes more than an average of once a term.

Even in the twenties such a single minded commitment must have been exceptional; today, surely unknown!

At the same time, Mill Hill also said 'goodbye' to Miss Turner, Matron of Winterstoke and the future Mrs. Pegrum."

Peggy's thirty one years at CCF were essentially ones of consolidation and then adjustment to the new order created by the 1944 Education Act. Compared with those of his predecessor, John Tindal Phillipson, when the school had nearly ceased to exist and then became a guinea pig maintained grammar school, and those of his successor Ken James when comprehensive clouds were looming and 'liberated' and 'permissive' youth was beginning to have its fling, Peggy's reign was perhaps relatively easy. Numbers which appear to have been a worry in the late twenties, began to build up helped , no doubt, by the rapid suburban development of the time. Traditional school activities continued to flourish and new ones were introduced steadily during the thirties. With ominous developments in Europe, Peggy, remarkable man that he was, joined the TA as a gunner in 1937. Already comfortably into his '40s he could with clear conscience, have avoided "the call". How much it also tells us of the man, "Major Pegrum" at Mill Hill, and "Headmaster" of CCF, that it did not demean him to become Gunner Pegrum at a local TA centre, where he is reputed to have been a part of a squad, including some of his own cadets, learning arms drill.

In August 1939, the TA was mobilised and for the six years of the war, Peggy was once again "away." Immediately commissioned 'Major' he was appointed to command 284 Bty. of 90 HAA Regt. RA. For four years he was in Malta and the Middle East, where he first commanded 16 HAA Bty. in Egypt, then put his teaching experience to good use training African Gunners and later running an Officers' school in Palestine until demobilisation in June 1945. In the London Gazette of 6th April, 1944, he was again mentioned in despatches for "Services in the Middle East."

Peggy's second innings at CCF began in September 1945. The remaining fifteen years were marked by a regular annual intake of almost 100, meaning that by 1960, with a rapidly expanding sixth-form, the roll was approaching 600, whereas pre-war it had reached only the early 400s. New subjects such as Biology, Economics and British Constitution were introduced; the old swimming bath became a biology laboratory, school dinners were provided and the dining hall, eventually, built. Some noteworthy academic performances were achieved, but the changing conditions meant that large numbers began moving on annually to university and other higher education, whereas pre-war, it had been only a handful per year. The growth of the Medical 6th was perhaps the most distinctive feature of the period and few, if any, comparable schools can have sent so many prospective doctors and dentists on their way. The Medical club was a logical result.

With centenary year approaching, Peggy was the driving force behind the production of that memorable book. How fortunate all Finchleians, old and new, are that it was published. Rumour had it that Peggy provided some of the essential finance to make its publication possible.

Reminiscences of the period are dominated by his hard work, by a single minded commitment to the college, which quickly percolated down to even the youngest boys. Despite growing bureaucracy and more and more interference from above, Peggy continued to teach every form in the school for its statutory RE period. This meant a 50% timetable, which few Headmasters even then could have managed. He came to know every boy in the school, every boy came to know him. Still he found the time to referee U15 XI Soccer games, immaculate in regulation referee's attire, and to umpire 2nd XI cricket games. Both continued certainly until a few years of retirement and probably to the very end.

Just as the Mill Hill writer had commented on his

rapid pace and his 'dashing' so could any person who viewed him at CCF. In term he was always in by 8am and rarely left before 7pm, often later; in the holidays few weekday mornings would not have witnessed him in his study.

When a dirty job had to be done, he led from the front. 143 bus stop duty comes to mind. Day in, day out, whatever the weather, for quite a number of years, Peggy hastened across the playground just before 4pm, and parked himself by the Hendon Central bound 143 bus stop to supervise the queue. Often his duty lasted well beyond 5 o' clock, when he would hurry back to his study. If one doubts whether a Headmaster could perhaps better use his time or not, the 143 bus duty in many ways encapsulates the man. Bad behaviour adversely affected the name of Christ's College. The College was the centre of his life and as no one would do the job – and who can blame them – (I suspect he would not even have asked), there was no alternative. If he returned home one and a half hours later – so be it.

Throughout his Headship he had the support without which his energies could never have been sustained. Mrs. Pegrum's home role was augmented on speech days when she looked after guests and, more important, from the standpoint of pupils, provided and served those scrumptious, beautifully laid-out teas in the school pavilion which made most, if not all our opponents, envious and served as one of the best ambassadors CCF could have.

Nora Beal, already well established as the Headmaster's Secretary in 1929, remained throughout Peggy's tenure and they retired together. No one knew the College better or could have been more aware of what was going on. Without this vital right hand, Peggy's activities would inevitably have to be curtailed. It was a remarkable partnership. If Peggy worked until 7.30 p.m, then so did Nora. What a debt the college, too, owes to Nora, and the affection in which she is held by generations of Old Finchleians reflects this.

Retirement was inevitably going to be in name only. Peggy joined the staff of Clark's College, North Finchley, where he taught until 1966, by which time Mrs. Pegrum's health began to fail rapidly and for a number of years he had a further full-time job, running the home and nursing his wife until her death.

Within two years of leaving CCF, Peggy was President of the OF Club, recognition by the Club at the earliest possible opportunity of his tireless support and interest throughout his Headship. He fulfilled the office with the same energy and dedication that had marked his whole career. Throughout the remaining twenty years, the Club remained a central part of his life. He presented "The Pegrum Cup" awarded annually to the "The Brain of the Club," and supported club activities whenever possible.

He was also invited to become president of the CRA and willingly accepted. No organisation could have wished for a more fervent President, always providing a Foreward to "Ricochet," unfailing support for dinners and reunions, and always showing encouraging interest in all ventures.

No news could have been greeted with greater pleasure than that of Peggy's impending marriage to Nora. The wedding and reception were splendid occasions. Almost all those present were connected with the Club or College or both, and it was a wedding, re-union, "OF Event" all wrapped up in one – a joyous event and one of the most memorable weddings I have attended. We must be thankful they were to be blessed with so many years together.

School functions continued to be attended and CCF cadet prizegivings and Annual Inspections rarely took place without his presence. Indeed the last time I saw him was at the Inspection in May 1982, a

coolish, blustery day with frequent heavy showers. For Peggy, by that time, it must have been a major effort to attend, yet he had walked from home to the College. He was, of course, immaculately dressed, every inch the old soldier and as the heavy rain descended and the parents fled for cover, Peggy, remained in his seat with the main party, collar down and availing himself only of an umbrella for protection. Peggy knew the form. There was a correct way to behave and as long as the cadets were getting wet so would he.

Some hundred mourners attended the funeral at Golders Green. Almost all were Finchleians, from Rupert Casson to representatives from the College, giving ample testimony to the affection in which he was held.

Peggy was a splendid example to those thousands over whom he had influence, whether at school or in war. Diligence, correctness, loyalty and sense of duty pervade his life and are immediately apparent. Less obvious, but equally impressive was his unfailing courtesy and genuine interest in and concern for others – especially his Old Boys.

To Nora go the condolences of all OFs, and many more. She, like us, can look back on a life that most of us would be proud to begin to approach.

In conclusion may I paraphrase words (written by Groggy?) used in tribute to John Tindal Phillipson: "Let us of the Club and school he loved look back and remember his many kindnesses and his long and faithful service, adding the name of Pegrum, to those of Reader White, of Whitehead, of Gallop, of Goodyear, of Dalgarno and of Phillipson as the School's most famous men."

P.W.G

CHAPTER 5:

1984-2004

Most of those who continue to join the Old Finchleians do so, at least initially, to play football or cricket and it continues to be one of the two principal roles of the main Club to provide the facilities to support those activities and those of the Golfing Society, CRA and Lodge. The other is to maintain and foster a mutually supportive relationship with Christ's College Finchley. That the relationship continues to be so strong is due in no small measure to the two most recent headmasters, Paul O'Shea, the current incumbent and particularly Brian Fletcher and his Deputy Martin Priestley who kept such close links with the club as they piloted the school through the comprehensive revolution and the move of CCF from Hendon Lane to the new location on the North Circular Road. Thanks must also go to John Bowra (1972-77), Brian Fuller (1951-57), Geoff Owen (1945-50), Alan Nicholls (1960-67), Bob Leeds and the many other OF members who have put in so much effort in this respect on behalf of the Club.

Tempus fugit and sadly the eighties saw the death of many of the founding fathers of the Old Finchleians Club as we know it today. It is easy to underestimate how difficult it must have been in the immediate post-war years to reinvigorate a club, many of whose leading members had been absent on active service for several years and some of whom had died. Not only was this achieved but in a period of financial austerity, the Southover ground was acquired and eventually the superb clubhouse which we all now enjoy was erected as a memorial to the 200 Old Finchleians who had died in two world wars. The war memorial to these brave men was rededicated at the new school in November 1991.

Tribute is paid earlier to Reg Mander, the principal moving force at this time. But the massive contribution made by some of his contemporaries must not be overlooked in this history of the OFs. Gordon Wilson (1923-9) who died in 1985 was a gentle man if ever there was one, quiet but with a waspish sense of humour. He was President in 1955/56, joint club secretary from 1951-62, formed the table tennis section, was 2nd XI cricket captain from 1958-62 and then variously cricket team secretary, scorer, statistician and press secretary. But even this formidable list understates his contribution. Until shortly before his death he was an ever present at Southover, always willing to lend a hand in tasks as diverse as

GORDON MONCRIEFF WILSON (CCF 1923-9)

Alan Duke writes:

News of the death of Gordon Wilson at the end of September came as a very sad blow to many OFs. Gordon had the knack of endearing himself to all generations. The amount of work he did for the OF Club is well known and his efficiency in these tasks entitled him to the respect and heartfelt thanks of all. He had suffered ill health which somewhat limited his mobility for more than 20 years, but this did not prevent him from living a full life and continuing his work for the Club.

He joined the Club on leaving school and was one of its keenest and most devoted members. He was President 1955/56. He became well known generally as Assistant secretary 1947-51 and Joint Secretary 1951-62. Up to within a month or so of his death, he hardly ever missed a Council Meeting and of course his experience was of great value. His last major job for the Club was the unofficial but nonetheless demanding one of ensuring that the bar was always adequately stocked and maintaining the associated cash and stock records. He did this for some years.

Outside the General Club, Gordon was largely instrumental in forming the Table Tennis section in 1934. He personally reached a high standard of performance

being for years a member of the OF First Team playing in the North Middlesex and Willesden Leagues. He was also an active footballer and cricketer. He was particularly devoted to cricket giving much of his time to administrative tasks for the Cricket Section He was Captain of the 2nd XI 1958-62 and at various times thereafter, team secretary, press secretary and 1st XI scorer. Gordon was also a keen member of the Dramatic Section from soon after joining the club to the demise of the OFDS in 1968. He was never anxious to play major parts, but he filled a number of minor roles with success. One rather larger part for which he will be remembered was Captain Carvallo in the play of that name.

Gordon's whole business career was spent with the Alliance Assurance Co. and its successor Sun Alliance. During the war he became a Captain in the Green Howards, serving in North Africa, Italy and France.

My own association with Gordon started in 1938 when I joined the Table Tennis Section. He became a close personal friend with whom I shared a lot of tasks both for the General Club and the Cricket Section. During my term as Club Secretary I could always rely on Gordon when help was needed or when I wanted a sensible second opinion on some problem. I shall miss him a great deal, but I know that goes for many other OFs as well. He was much a part of the Southover scene and known to so many that his passing inevitably leaves a big gap. Our deep sympathy goes to his OF brother, Denis and sister Lavender.

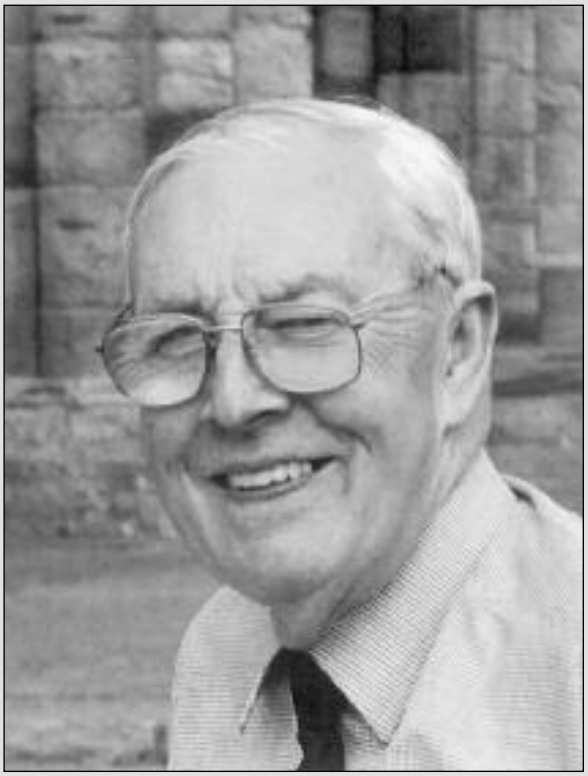
bar stocktaking and running the annual winter quizzes with George Buist (1933/34) another stalwart of this era who himself died suddenly two years later. In many ways George was the antithesis of Gordon, noisy and often opinionated but always with the good of the club at heart. He was President in 1965/66 and Chairman of the Southover Committee from 1971-80. A fixture at the bar on weekend evenings, his generosity was amply demonstrated by the substantial legacy he left to the club on his death used in part to fund the lounge that bears his name.

The third of this triumvirate was Alan Duke CBE (1931-36) who died in 1993. Being a distinguished civil servant, nothing flustered Alan or if it did, it led only to him biting harder on his ever-present pipe. Alan was among other things Old Finchleians Club Secretary for 28 years until1984, President in 1985/86 and administrator of the Old Finchleians Foundation, essential roles he undertook with quiet efficiency. For many years he was a friend to everyone and the fount of all knowledge about the OFs.

It is always a risk to record the contributions of particular club members for fear of giving offence to those who may be omitted. However mention must also be made of Ken Wylie (1923-28), President in 1970/71 and Club Treasurer from 1948-68, who died in 1987; Mary Mander, Reg's ever supportive wife who died in 1986 and who made a major contribution to club life in her own right particularly as organiser of bingo and the white elephant stall she ran at Memorial Day when this was a major fund raiser for the Club; and Frank Kittel (1918-26) who attended a club dinner nearly fifty years after he was President in1948/49 and supported the club in many capacities. I am sure that all the above would give a wry smile to know that as a result of so many deaths in this period, the side of the bar that they used to frequent became known affectionately as the 'departure lounge'.

The last twenty years has also seen the death or retirement of long serving members of the Christ's College staff. Ken James, Peggy's successor, Nora Pegrum, Henry 'Harry' Turl who served the school from 1921-64, Harold 'George' Sayers, Stewart Lack, Wilf Tallis, Tudor Rhys, Dr Fred Barber and Brian Quinn sadly died, some all too young. Brian Fletcher, Martin Priestley, and Phil Molloy, whose anarchic wit has enlivened many a session at CCF and Southover, retired. Their contribution to both school and club has rightly been recognized by their election as Presidents of the OFs. It is also pleasing to report that at the time of writing Ron Oliver is still going strong and in regular correspondence with the Club.

But cometh the hour cometh the men and more than adequate replacements have stepped into the shoes of the 'founding fathers', both as Presidents and as officers of the Club. John Bowra took over the reins as Secretary from Alan Duke and still holds the position. He is a true successor to the Duke, efficiently undertaking his duties in the background in



ALAN DUKE C.B.E. (CCF 1931-36)

I am indebted to those members who have submitted tributes and reminiscences of Alan. I hope you will agree that these summarise perfectly the life and character of this great Old Finchleian.

Peter Allen (CCF 1929-35) writes: "I knew Alan ever since our prep school days. The Rev. H.G. Phillipson (brother of CCF Headmaster J.T. Phillipson) who was Vicar of St. Barnabus Church in Woodside Park invited us both to sing in his church choir. Alan, two years my junior, took over from me as lead chorister when my voice broke. All his life he was an enthusiastic member of local church choirs and choral societies.

On arrival at Christ's College in 1931 Alan was placed in the first of H.B. Pegrum's experimental 'X' forms, to take matriculation in four instead of the usual five years. His brightness had been spotted even at this early stage. He passed all his exams with ease and followed his father into the Civil Service. In the Treasury and later the Civil Service Department his talents took him on to a distinguished career which was recognised on his retirement by the award of the C.B.E.

During the war years 1939-1945 he served in the Rifle Brigade. He was taken prisoner in North Africa and was later in P.O.W. camps in Italy and Germany. I kept in touch with him by correspondence during his captivity and I still have the P.O.W. postcards he sent me. His school German stood him in good stead as a camp interpreter. After the war we met regularly as members of the OF Club and as fellow enthusiasts in various forms of public transport. He worked indefatigably for the Club as a long-serving Secretary, Club President, administrator of the OF Foundation, and in countless other less formal capacities. In particular his organisation of club annual dinners and the distribution of club newsletters were invaluable. A kindly man, exemplary servant of the Crown, wartime soldier, untiring worker for the OF Club, and the best of friends, he will be irreparably missed by all who knew him."

John Gunson (CCF 1958-65) writes:" I last spoke to Alan on the evening that the cricket 1st XI had clinched promotion. He must have made the call just in time. Our conversation, not surprisingly, quickly progressed to reminiscing about cricketing days shared. We discussed a 1st XI game in probably 1977 or '78 (although it could have been 1974!) at Cheshunt, who were then one of our stronger opponents. Several regular players were unavailable and I had such 2nd XI stalwarts as Peter Bounsall and Alan in the side. Our batting was weak and we managed only 120 or so. I was even shorter of bowling – Roger Yowart, John Theed and myself. At some stage, I gambled and put Alan on. He proceeded to take 5-20, including an Essex 2nd XI player and one Herts county player, and we won comfortably. I bowled at the other end – something like 15 overs for 16 runs (no wickets).

Alan told me he still felt guilty that he had taken all the wickets and I hadn't.

For me, Alan typified an OF summer. He was kind and courteous, always with a story to tell, and clearly loving his cricket. I shall remember him with much affection and respect. Stalwarts are not easy to replace."

a quiet and unassuming way – so much so that for a while whenever his name was mentioned at the OFs, it always provoked the response, 'Who?' – a joke he took in good part. Geoff 'Gippy' Levy (1941-48) took over from Ken Wylie as Treasurer and after twenty years of exemplary service handed the cashbox over to Alan Jackson (1965-72) who still controls the purse strings and ensures that the Club remains in a healthy financial situation. Three Treasurers in 55 years is a continuity of service not dissimilar to the Headmasters of Christ's College! Jeff Baines and Terry Payne also merit mention, Geoff for his work in maintaining the membership list and Terry as long serving Assistant Treasurer (Subscriptions), whose principal role was to chase members seemingly reluctant to part with the very modest annual membership fee.

Colin Byatt (1946-52) undertook the thankless task of editor of the Old Finchleians Newsletter for 19 years – a task sometimes made more difficult by the need to chase reports from some sectional secretaries – before handing over to Roger Bone ((1958-65) in 1993 and Geoff Owen in 1995. The Newsletter is the only automatic contact that OFs who do not get to Southover retain with the Club and is in a sense the glue that binds the Club together. It has been the source of much that appears in this Centenary book and has enabled OFs all round the world to maintain some contact with the club and each other. Incidentally, Colin has recently had published the autobiographical account of his life as a schoolboy in suburban London during WWII entitled 'In His Own Little Room Again'. Thanks are also due to Dave and Steve Holyland for their work in designing and printing the Newsletter – now in full colour! Latterly it has been supplemented by our excellent web site (www.) initiated and maintained by Bob Leeds, which now receives around 500 'hits' a month.

The Club does not run without many people putting in much unpaid time, particularly on the Southover Committee, which manages the ground and clubhouse. Roger Bone took over from George Buist as Chairman of the Southover Committee ably assisted by Secretaries Geoff Niblett (1962-69) and then by long serving Mick Wiffen (1964-71), both great supporters of the club. Members coming to Southover seldom give much thought to how the pitches and cricket square are maintained, how the bar is stocked or how the clubhouse is kept clean and in good decorative repair. While many contribute, for the last fifteen years, one man, Geoff Owen, has played an increasingly large role in ensuring the smooth running of Southover and the Club owes him an enormous debt of gratitude. Initially taking over the running of the bar, Geoff subsequently moved into the flat attached to the Clubhouse and is effectively the unpaid site manager of what is now a six figure business. He has been Chairman of the Southover Committee since 1987, liaises with Clubhouse users, oversees the maintenance of the buildings and grounds, manages and staffs the bar and looks after security. If he has a fault it is that he takes too much upon himself. As a result of his work, we have a bar that would be the envy of many pubs and which is the Club's major source of income. In true Arkwright fashion, it is generally open all hours, a fact that some members tend to forget if Geoff is at times a little irascible after a surfeit of single malt the night before!

The clubhouse and ground have seen a number of developments in the last twenty years, some small but all significant to the efficient running of a club that must look after the pennies as well as the pounds. Perhaps the biggest development was the George Buist Lounge, an extension to the Clubhouse funded by George's generous legacy to the Club, which was opened on December 15th 1991. This has provided a quiet area off the main bar that is also used for meetings when the main clubhouse is in use. The Southover Committee is currently considering how it might be brought into greater use, perhaps by replacing the fixed wall between it and the bar with a sliding partition.

The bar has been further improved by the installation in 2003 of a sophisticated cooling system in the store to keep the merchandise in prime condition. A wide range of international lagers is available from refrigerators in the bar to supplement the extensive draft beers and real ales that are always on tap. This allows the 'Round the World' challenge where customers who manage to drink 11 different bottled lagers are rewarded by paying only half price for them. This sounds daunting but was recently achieved by five of six CCF senior boys who attempted it. The future of the OFs seems in good hands! The seating and other furnishings in the bar area have also been replaced to improve its ambience.

The interior of the Clubhouse was also enhanced by the acquisition of the team boards from the pavilion at the old school field at Dollis. The earliest of these dates from 1866 and following some restoration, the boards now adorn the walls of the main hall and the changing rooms. Interestingly,

Four of the many boards relocated to Southover, including 1873 and R.W.Giddy said to have introduced Rugby to South Africa

R.W.S. Giddy is said to have introduced Rugby Union to South Africa. When he arrived there, the football played was a mixture of football and rugby. With the aid of a couple of other ruggerites, he started a Rugby Union , acquired some Cups from the UK and the game took a grip over the whole Country. They were saved not a moment too soon. The pavilion, which will stir fond memories in many sporting Finchleians and dated from around 1915, had fallen into disrepair and tragically, was burnt down by vandals in 2002.

The old CCF buildings at Hendon Lane remain in use for education now housing Pardes House an orthodox Jewish grammar school. Regrettably the fives courts were demolished, an act which cost Pardes House and its proprietors a substantial fine for the destruction of a listed building.

Though many Finchleians still think of it as 'new', the Clubhouse is now thirty seven years old and major and minor maintenance has been required to keep it in tip-top condition. For many years, the ubiquitous David 'Taffy' Evans (1943-51), an ever-present on the Southover Committee, played a major role in this as he has done in so much of the life of the Club. Taffy organized countless working parties to clean and redecorate the Clubhouse. Helpers attracted by the lure of free beer were often to be found at the Club on a Sunday morning taking direction from the 'Fuhrer' though it must be said that his colour sense did not always match his commitment!

More major work has also been required. In 1991 the entire roof was replaced at a cost of £10000 and in 1997 replacement double glazing was installed, funded largely by an £8000 grant by the Old Finchleian Foundation. This has done much to reduce external maintenance and heating bills, the latter assisted by conversion of the heating system from oil to natural gas. The kitchen was also significantly improved by a generous donation by Colin Taylor (1950-57) in his Presidential year. The car park has been extended at least twice to reflect the growing affluence of Finchleians.

The ground, too, has been improved. Surviving the 1987 'hurricane' with no serious damage to either the Clubhouse or nearby trees, the most crucial task in the late eighties was to end erosion caused by the brook that was threatening the bottom end of 1st XI pitch. This was finally resolved in 1992 in cooperation with developers building near Southover by diversion of some of the flow. Continual drainage work has substantially improved the playing surface during the winter to the extent that the Club has hosted many football finals and representative matches in recent years. The 'bear trap' at the bottom end of the ground that would often entrap unwary visiting forwards is sadly no more! A number of groundsmen have worked hard over the last twenty years, the longest serving being Dave Sutton and Derek Pope who left in 2003. Ground maintenance machinery has progressively been upgraded over the years including the addition of a 'sit-on' mower kindly donated in 2003 by ex-President and 1st XI cricket captain Howard Masters (1960-68). Currently ground maintenance is being undertaken by a contractor, an arrangement which it must be said has caused a degree of controversy but which is being kept under close review by the Southover Committee.

The improved bottom pitch

While Southover facilities are provided for the use of Club members, financial imperatives dictate that all reasonable sources of income for the club must be tapped. For many years, the Clubhouse has therefore been let on a regular basis to a range of organizations. The Southover Nursery brings the patter of tiny feet every weekday morning, a dancing class treads the light fantastic on four afternoons a week, the Finchley Games Club has a weekly evening meeting to follow its rather esoteric pursuits and the Club is also used regularly by the Inner Wheel and the Woodside Park Residents Association. Of course, the Club also continues to be used for private functions by members and friends and the pitches are also rented out from time to time.

A successful club is however all about its members. The majority of current social life at Southover inevitably centres on the football and cricket sections but two annual events, the Cheese and Wine Party and the Annual Dinner have continued to draw other members to the club in large numbers, often for their annual or bi-annual visit. The Cheese and Wine Party organized by the Vice-President, where the fare has long since expanded way beyond cheese, has flourished each May to mark the end of the Presidential year.

The Annual Dinner has been held mainly in the Clubhouse for the past twenty years, the notable exception being 1990 when it took place so memorably in the school hall at Hendon Lane, immediately prior to the final move of CCF from the site. Two hundred members attended and were allowed access to both the New and Old Buildings, including the upper levels of the Tower that were always out of bounds to pupils. Many ghosts and memories stirred that evening. It was easy to imagine Montagu de la Pumfrey ensconced in his office in the gymnasium or the clickety-clack of metallic heels that heralded the approach of 1960s Deputy Head Dr Bather as he scoured the corridors in search of miscreants to punish! Members came from far and wide for

a last look at the old school. Some like Geoffrey Hellings (1916), WF Thompson and Frank Kittel (1918), HW Amory (1919) and Dickie Allen, Arthur Gould and Jimmy Knight (1921) had come and gone before the 'New Building' existed. It was fitting that Martin Priestley, the Deputy Head should preside as the 1989/90 President.

Memorial Day, the fete which for decades was a gathering place for Finchleians and the Club's major source of finance outside the bar, was held until 1984, organized latterly by Jerry 'Reg' Kilby (1969-74). Many older Finchleians mourned its passing but in its final years it depended more on the public than members for support and the returns it generated became disproportionate to the effort involved in its organization.

There are of course other gatherings. In November 1996, Geoff Owen organized a reunion to mark fifty years of the Old Finchleians at Southover which attracted members from far and wide. Taffy Evans, a one-man rival to Friends

Class of '43 reunion

Left to right: Arthur Oates (1943-48), Keith Johnson (1943-50), Vic Beaumont (1943-46), Maurice Alcock (1943-48), Norman De Mesquita, (1943-48) (front), David Evans (1943-51), John Bunker (1943-48), Paul Levy (1943-48), Morton Morris (1943-48).

Reunited, has made it a labour of love to assemble as many as possible of his contemporaries in the class of '43 and this group now meets at Southover to celebrate old times over a pint. The group includes Norman de Mesquita, longtime BBC Radio London cricket guru and Arthur (Simon) Oates, thespian and raconteur. Amazingly, Taffy has tracked down 26 of his classmates 15 of whom attended the 2002 Annual Dinner. Two other reunions of note also took place. In September 1989, John Blackmore (1933-39) organized a gathering of 26 CCF pupils of 1937-41 vintage to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the outbreak of World War II. In September 1995 18 of the 28 pupils who comprised form V(a) in 1945 held a weekend reunion at a hotel in Oxfordshire to mark their 50th anniversary having sworn in 1945 to keep in touch. They included Michael Lewis who travelled from Australia for the event.

Mention must also be made of the table quizzes run in recent years by Geoff and Jane Niblett that replaced the team quizzes run for so many years by Gordon Wilson and George Buist. These universally popular, amusing and well-attended biannual cerebral challenges, accompanied by a fish supper, are brilliantly compiled and have covered subjects as diverse as underground stations and pop music.

In recent years, it has been good to see so many Old Finchleians at Club functions resplendent in striped blazers in the OF colours, the initial supply made from specially woven material generously donated by Alan Nicholls in his Presidential year. They have also been spotted on national television when worn by groups of members at both Lords and Henley and bring a special touch for example at the dinners that always follow meetings of the Golfing Society.

The Club maintains a membership of around 700. This includes 150 Associate members who were not fortunate enough to attend CCF. Associate membership has greatly strengthened the sports sections and has generated many of the regulars at Southover who have contributed so much to the Club, notably Bob Leeds, Gordon Finnie, Steve and Dave Holyland (who runs the 200 Club, a monthly draw that raises valuable funds) and Mick Ward.

Many former scions of CCF, not all OF members, have achieved prominence or been honoured in the last twenty years. Dr Jonathan Sacks is Chief Rabbi; David Young became a Life Peer, Privy Counsellor and Cabinet Minister in Margaret Thatcher's government; Professor John Kingman, Vice-Chancellor of Bristol University and leading educationalist received the KBE in 1985; Mickey Topple became ADC to HM Queen Elizabeth II; Richard Desmond started OK magazine and became proprietor of the Daily Express; Stanley Kalms, Chairman of Dixons was knighted; Chris Hannington and John Niblett received the OBE; Jack Baxter (1942-47)has become one of the UK's leading veteran tennis players winning national and international titles in many age groups. I am sure that there are many others worthy of note whose achievements have not become known to the Club and we congratulate them all.

With the great changes that have taken place in society over the last 20 years and more, there are those who will argue that old scholars' societies are an anachronism. Some old boys societies have indeed folded during this time and it is undeniable that many former pupils of Christ's College do not join the Old Finchleians when they leave the alma mater. But this has always been the case and clearly, many people do want to find ways of renewing and nurturing friendships with old schoolmates; if that were not the case web sites such as Friends Reunited would not flourish as they do. So as the Club has passed into the new Millennium, it has thrived and may even be part of a trend in which people seek roots in an increasingly uncertain world. For as long as a visit to Southover guarantees, as it does, good fellowship and cheap beer we can be confident that, although it will continue to change and develop, the Old Finchleians Club and its members will prosper.

I.C.B

CHAPTER 6:

FOOTBALL

HOW IT ALL BEGAN……

Although the Football Section celebrated its Centenary in the year 2001, it actually started on November 5th 1898, when for the first time, the Old Boys played the School in a game of Association football. The main reason for the match was that the previous year the School had made the decision to change from playing Rugby to Football.

However, it was not until 1901 that the regular Old Finchleians' Football Club started with a game on the College ground against a side called "the Foxes". Those early seasons were modest in terms of success, but in 1910/11 came a big decision to enter league football – the 1st XI entered the Premier Division of the Middlesex County Amateur League and the 2nd XI joined Division 2 of the same league. The 3rd XI beset by ground problems, managed only half a dozen matches.

We entered Cup competitions for the first time in 1913, namely the Middlesex, AFA Senior and Charity Cups and had our first hint of success with our 2nd XI finishing second in the League and gaining promotion.

In 1914, World War I intervened and the Club was closed down for four years whilst many of our players were involved in the conflict.

Resuming in 1919 at a new home, Finchley Cricket Club, we steadily built up our playing strength and in 1929 we joined the Southern Olympian League, where we were to remain for almost 70 years.

The most important change in the Club's history occurred in 1946 when we took over our current ground at Southover. This had been bought for £3,000, largely due to the fund raising efforts of Reg Mander. A sectionalised pavilion was erected later – all achieved by voluntary labour and funded by a sum of £4,650 raised in 3% debentures and donations by 278 people.

By the time of the Club's Jubilee celebrations in 1951 we were well established, running five sides and looking forward to the next 50 years……

THE FIFTIES……

The second fifty years of the Old Finchleians' Football Club started very pleasantly on 29th September 1951 with four of the five teams playing at Southover with staggered kick-offs. There was a good turn out of spectators and the games were followed by a party. By now 'Southover' had been up and running for some five years.

The season proved to be one of the most successful in the Club's history to date because although the 1st XI under Brian Cosgrove finished only 4th in Division 2 of the SOL, the Reserves captained by Jim Jarvis beat Old Grammarians 4-3 to win the new Old Boys' Junior Cup. The 3rd XI led by Dennis Wakefield, who was to take over from Fred Jarvis as Club Secretary the following season, were not to be outdone and beat Old Esthameians 2-0 in the Final of the League Minor Cup and were runners up in SOL Minor A.

The following season saw even more success, with the 1st XI gaining prestige, admiration and respect from the national daily papers for reaching the semi-final of the AFA Senior Cup, the first Old Boys side in 40 years so to do.

Football Dinner circa 1953

Unfortunately, they were beaten by H.M.S. Daedalus at Salisbury, a team including two amateur internationals and several full naval caps. They also reached the League final, losing to League champions Lister Sports, but gained promotion to SOL Division 1. Skipper Cosgrove and Jack Firth played for the Representative side. The Reserves, as holders, lost in the Final of the Old Boys' Cup but the 3rds repeated last year's success in the SOL Minor Cup beating Old Monovians 1-0 and they again finished second in Minor A.

The 1953/54 season saw several innovations by Reg Mander. He presented the new Jubilee Six-a-Side Cup to the Club. Eight teams took part, a Christ's College team losing to Old Finchleians in the final. Reg Mander also presented another Cup, to the SOL, for competition between 4th and 5th XI's. Reg also paid for Joe Wade of Arsenal to provide pre-season training, following in the earlier steps of Eddie Perry (Fulham).

For the first time, an 'end of season' supper was held at Southover. No cups were won, but the 1st XI, back in Division 1, finished a creditable 3rd and Brian Cosgrove and Jeff Hutchinson played for the league side against both Oxford and Cambridge Universities.

1954/55 saw the 1st XI win the SOL Division 1 Championship for the first time since 1931/32 and Boxing Day saw the first friendly match against Old Cholmeleians, a fixture that still takes place today. Jeff Hutchinson played in every Representative game for the SOL and at the supper Eric Bussell was presented with a briefcase to mark 25 years in AFA football.

1st XI 1954/55 – SOL Division 1 Champions
Left to right, *Back Row:*- J.Hutchinson, R.S.Baker, G.P.Levy, S.Smalley, J.Baxter, K.Eldred, E.J.Ellis.
Front Row:- P.F.A.Loffler, B.C.Cosgrove, D.J.Clark, G.J.Fitch.

The following season saw the 1st XI retain the League Championship and it all came down to the last game of the season against Post Office Savings Bank. We needed to draw, but won 2-0 and it was the charismatic Brian Cosgrove's last game as captain. Our application to join the Southern Amateur League although approved by the SAL Executive met organised opposition from Catford Wanderers which swayed the meeting and we were turned down. Not until 1998 were we eventually elected to the SAL.

"The Times" – 8th April 1957

With Pip Loffler as captain, the 1956/57 season saw us win the Old Boys' Senior Cup for the first time since we were invited to participate in 1913. This was our second appearance in the Final. Old Stationers had beaten us in 1929; this time we made no mistake running out 3-2 winners. "The Times" of Monday 8th April, described the game as being "an affable match of fierce endeavour!" The Reserves reached the Middlesex AFA Junior Cup Semi-Final for the first time and the same stage of the Old Boys' Cup for the 4th year running. Davis Cup tennis player Bobby Wilson was by now playing centre forward for this team and became the side's leading goalscorer.

1958/59 saw Geoff Owen installed as captain, a job he was to do for eleven years. He played for the SOL twice, Jack Baxter appeared three times, and Geoff Levy once. The 1st XI entered the Amateur Cup for the first time since

Celebrations at SOL Dinner, Victoria
Left to right, D.Wakefield, G.Wilson, A.McKenzie, D.Clark, L.Hodge, T.Payne, J.Hutchison, L.Long, E.Ellis, R.Mander, H.Baker, R. de Ste. Croix, R.Sturley, N.Bigsby, B.Cosgrove (with cup).

The Amateur Cup at Edgware Town
'Keeper Keith Eldred and right back George Nicholls scramble the ball away as Denis Clark looks on.

before the war and lost 0-4 to Edgware Town. The 996 spectators saw Finchleians keep the game goalless until the 70th minute before tiring and conceding four goals – here 'Keeper Keith Eldred and right back George Nicholls scramble the ball away as Denis Clark looks on. The Reserves reached the Final of the Middlesex AFA Junior Cup for the first time and lost to "bogey side" Old Latymerians 1-3. Our side won the Easter Monday Sixes beating Southgate Olympic, and the supper returned to Southover again, in the form of a buffet, after a short spell at the Prince Albert Hotel in Golders Green.

The 1959/60 season saw the Club reach a peak, helped by the return of some notable players, including Norman Teague, Jim Simmonds, Peter Moody, Len Clark and Andy James. It proved to be a most successful yet disappointing year, epitomised by the 1st XI failing to clinch the Division 1 Championship, managing only one win and one draw in their last five games. Reaching the Final of the Old Boys' Cup for the second year, we started as favourites against Alleyn Old Boys and led 2-1 with goals from Denis Clark and Jack Baxter, but went down to two late goals. Another disappointment came on the same day, when the Reserves went down 2-6 in the League Junior Challenge Cup to Old Grammarians. However, they were comfortable league winners bringing the Junior 1 Championship to Southover for the first time. Jack Baxter played for the Representative side five times and gained his league tie. Easter Monday was brilliantly sunny and warm and our team won the Sixes Cup beating Old Stationers in the Final.

THE SIXTIES……

1960/61 saw the beginning of a decline in the strength of the Club. That coupled with the postponement of many games due to a very wet winter saw many many players lose interest and not make themselves available when play was finally possible. The Amateur Cup was entered one last time (the FA would no longer accept our application) and the 1st XI were beaten 0-2 at the Willesden Stadium. By mid-March our top three sides were all in danger of relegation and only a point snatched in the last game saved the 1st XI from relegation. Cup successes at all levels were non-existent and the 2nd XI, now under Ron Dunton, were eliminated from all cups by Christmas.

Jeff Hutchinson took over as Secretary from Dennis Wakefield in the 1961/62 season and Norman Teague became 1st XI captain. Despite a reasonable start to the season, longish injuries to Geoff Owen and Peter Webb, left an inexperienced side with little hope of avoiding relegation and the team won only five league games. The Reserves under the captaincy of Taffy Evans, were badly affected by 1st XI problems but managed to avoid relegation as did the 3rd and 4th XI's. With the aid of Phil Molloy at the school, Taffy Evans introduced the idea of Colts matches; these games were played midweek early and late season at Southover, with the view to encourage future OF membership. These lasted until 1973 by which time with the School 1st and 2nd teams playing so many matches a season, it became virtually impossible to fit them in.

1962/63 was the year of the big freeze. No football was played at Southover between Boxing Day 1962 and mid-March 1963, or indeed anywhere else. In March the SOL decided to abandon the league competitions and this left just a handful of cup matches in which we did not progress very far. In March, Jeff Hutchinson had to give up the secretary's post for personal reasons and Taffy Evans took over for the rest of the season, a position he was to hold for the next nine years. He and Ron Dunton organised the Sixes for the first time, four extra teams were invited and the competition was run on a four group basis, newcomers Old Esthameians being the first winners of the new format.

The 1963/64 season turned out to be the most disastrous in the history of the Club. By Christmas our sides had been eliminated from all eleven Cup competitions and all sides, except for the 4th XI, finished in relegation spots. However, due to the addition of two new clubs to the league only the 3rd XI went down. It was clear that the decline was due to the fact that little or no effort had been made to recruit new blood. The newly introduced 'youth policy' two years earlier had come too late and we were left with a shortage of good players. With the help of George Robb and of course Phil Molloy, strenuous efforts were made to encourage boys to join. Cliff Holland while still at school, played regularly for the 1st XI, now back under Geoff Owen's captaincy, Geoff being forced to field a young and inexperienced side.

However, they say the darkest hour is just before the dawn and so it proved in 1964/65. By Christmas 1964 it was clear that the downward slide of the previous four years was over! The improvement was not achieved overnight but by a hard working committee which over 18 months had put the Club on a sound basis both administratively and financially. More than 200 ex-CCF

Reserve XI 1964/65 – SOL Junior Cup Winners
Left to right, *Back Row:*- C.Hannington, J.B.Quinn, R.D.Dunton, R.Garson, R.J.Hyde, B.Coleman,
Front Row:- T.Marchant, G.P.Levy, A.R.J.Emery, D.B.Evans, D.B.Pollard.

footballers were contacted and this brought in 15 not so immediate leavers and three more teachers to join: Phil Molloy, Brian Quinn and Jack Ford. A 5th XI was started again after a gap of eight years and played twenty friendly matches under the captaincy of Dennis Wakefield, using the school 1st XI pitch. The highlight of the season was undoubtedly the Reserves winning the SOL Junior Cup for the first time, beating Board of Trade 6-3 – the first trophy of any sort for five years. After a slow start, the 1st XI with Geoff Owen back at the helm, enjoyed their best season since 1959/60 and managed to finish in the top half of Senior 2.

The 1965/66 season proved to be one of consolidation although the Reserves were relegated, whilst the 1st XI finished fourth in Senior 2. Under new skipper Colin Taylor, the 3rd XI finished second and were promoted back to Minor A. Colts matches continued, with three games, all won, played in the Autumn. The Sixes were cancelled due to bad weather for the second successive year and the secretary began to have thoughts about a change of date to a Sunday in the Autumn. Reg Mander once again provided pre-season training and this year following in the illustrious steps over some 15 years of Eddie Perry (Fulham), Joe Wade (Arsenal), Jimmy Hill (Fulham), Danny Blanchflower (Spurs), George Robb (Spurs), Eddie Baily (Spurs) Tony Marchi (Spurs), we had Terry Medwin (Spurs and Wales) who put plenty of enthusiasm into both his coaching and post-training bar stories.

1966/67 proved to be a successful season with several records broken. For the first time ever the Club reached five Cup Finals, won the SOL Sixes Plate Competition, entered the 5th XI into the league and toured abroad – to Le Raincy, Paris, Finchley's twin town. Unfortunately, only one of the Cup Finals was won, this being accomplished by Colin Taylor's 3rd XI, bringing the SOL Minor Cup back to Southover after a lapse of 14 years, by beating Old Esthameians 3-2 at Distillers. This year the Sixes Competition was held on the first Sunday in October. Twelve teams participated on two pitches and our side lost in the Final to Old Stationers in rather wet, but nevertheless much more favourable conditions than hitherto.

The Easter Tour to Le Raincy proved extremely worthwhile. We took 42 (including OFs, ladies and some 6th formers) and played seven games, winning two and drawing two, with the under 20 (youth) side captained by Alan Nicholls, only losing on corners in the Final of the Le Raincy Tournament.

1967/68 was initially overshadowed by that long-awaited event – the opening of the new Clubhouse. On 25th November 1967 came the great day when 2nd and 3rd XI players used the new dressing-rooms for the first time. Two weeks later, the bar and clubroom were operational and then on Saturday 16th December, the Clubhouse was officially opened in conjunction with the Christmas Party. Over 60 football members attended, but they took some finding as an estimated crowd of some 400 OF members, wives and girlfriends were present, a figure never seen since. Present members should be grateful for the foresight of our seniors and especially Reg Mander, whose dream it all was, a dream in which he pushed tirelessly from the purchase of the ground, the first Clubhouse and finally the present building which we still enjoy today. On the field we were also successful, pride of place going to John Niblett's 2nd XI who won Junior 2 after just two seasons in the lower sphere, this being our first league championship for eight years. Eiddwen

4th XI 1968/69 – Minor C & Minor Cup Winners
Left to right, *Back Row:*- H.Masters, E.Isaacs, D.Ray, J.Theed, P.Finn, L.Sims, A.Brooks,
Front Row:- J.Headford, J.Ford, P.Molloy, M.Riches (Capt.), C.Creese, B.Mercer.

Evans offered to organise the Supper for 100 members and guests and this function – nowadays with outside caterers – has been held every year since.

The first full season in the new Clubhouse (1968/69) saw plenty of enthusiasm, club spirit and playing success – our best season for nine years. The 1st XI gained promotion, we reached four Cup Finals, won two trophies, started a 6th XI and introduced Sunday football to Southover. In an attempt to maximise Southover usage, we entered the 1st XI in the Barnet Sunday League Premier Division and we finished halfway. The team reached the Final of the Barnet League Cup and lost 0-1 to Thatched Barn at Finchley FC The big disappointment so far as the SOL was concerned was the failure of the 1st XI to win Senior Division 2, although they did gain promotion to Senior Division 1. Under new captain Mike Riches, the 4th XI "did the double" winning Minor C and the Mander Cup for the first time.

Having striven for seven years to get back in Division 1, it was a huge disappointment to return to Division 2 immediately in 1969/70, the 1st XI losing 16 of their 20 SOL matches, the loss of John Lovett – on secondment to Carnegie College – and Ted Dennis being a huge blow. Initially all went well: the Mander Sixes Cup was won and the team were at the top of the Barnet Sunday League until February, but then fell away badly as the Saturday problems spilled over to Sundays. The Reserves managed a mid-table position and the lower sides were all quite successful proving that there was by now a very strong base to the Club. The 4th XI took their second successive league title, winning Minor B comfortably. The 5th XI gained promotion to Minor D and the 6th XI playing in Minor F lost only three games all season.

THE SEVENTIES……

The 70s were undoubtedly a new dawning for the Football Club. The number of boys joining from the school and staying as members was still just a trickle, despite strong links with the school and the fact that the head of P.E., John Lovett, was playing for the first team. However, a couple of years earlier the OF Club had made the decision to increase its membership by admitting associate members who were not ex-CCF schoolboys, on a limited basis, and it was not to be too long before this started to show its rewards and assist our playing strength considerably.

No trophies were won in 1970/71. It proved to be a moderate season, a consequence of most of our sides playing in higher divisions than hitherto, although the 5th XI did gain promotion to Minor C under new skipper John Teare. Geoff Owen, after eleven seasons out of the previous twelve as 1st XI skipper handed over the reins to Brian Hughes and they finished sixth in Senior 2. The Reserves, initially under Ernie Gregory, until his promotion to the 1st XI, and then Peter Graves, had a poor season but were invited to remain in Junior 1 due to Old Esthameians joining the Southern Amateur League while Mike Riches' 4th XI, now in Minor A, were playing against the top 3rd XI's in the league, including our own, but managed to avoid relegation. The Sunday XI's third season in the Barnet Sunday League proved to be the last for a few years because despite finishing comfortably halfway under new captain Stuart McKenzie it was proving more and more difficult to field a side.

Taffy Evans had already decided that 1971/72 would be his last season in the secretary's chair and he hoped for a good season, but it was not to be. Both the 1st and 2nd XI finished in bottom but one position. As it happened, the 1st XI avoided the indignity of relegation to the 3rd Division because the SOL took on two new clubs. The Reserves, however, similarly reprieved the previous year, did go down to Junior 2. The 3rd XI under new captain Bruce Mercer, had a reasonable season, but the 4th XI, still playing in Minor A against the best 3rd XI's in the league, (including ours whom they beat once), found the going very tough and were also relegated. For the first time, we acquired a pitch at Oakhill Park, considered at that time to be among the best in the borough and much coveted. Our social programme continued to be most successful. Saturday night dances started by Dennis Wakefield were run on an almost monthly basis and with 'Secretary to be' Mike Riches now arranging the occasional stag show, there was an excellent spirit running throughout the Club. We were now running six sides, four had been the order of the day nine years earlier and the 4th, 5th and 6th XI's were all playing at a higher divisional level than any other SOL club, surely a very sound base to work from.

With Mike Riches taking over as Secretary at the beginning of the 1972/73 season, Taffy Evans turned his attention to setting up a veterans' XI for over 35s to play in Sunday cup competitions. Meanwhile, the 6th XI, captained by Barry Coleman, had success in winning Minor Divison G.

The following season, and in only their second, under the captaincy of Geoff Owen, the newly formed veterans defeated Old Monovians 1-0 in the final to capture the Old Boys' Cup. What was so remarkable about these early

Vets XI 1973/74 – Old Boys' Vets Cup Winners
Left to right, *Back Row:*- I.Sutherland, J.Hutchinson, A.Clark, P.Chisholm, R.Davey, P.Molloy, M.Riches,
Front Row:- D.Pollard, J.Baxter, G.Owen, C.Taylor, D.Evans.

seasons of vets football was that up until then most players used to hang up their boots by the time they reached their early 30s, but many came out of retirement to play on a Sunday.

The Club had made successful tours to France in 1967 and Belgium and Holland in 1969, and with the social side of the Club running so strongly, Alan Nicholls decided, in 1974, to once again let an Old Finchleians side parade their skills on the Continent and with the help of 'Stan Tours' arranged a four day trip to Lloret de Mar. Stan (or the invisible man as he became better known) had the uncanny knack of disappearing whenever any of the arrangements went wrong, which seemed to be most of the time. No coaches, no pitches, no opposition were just some of his slip ups. So successful was this tour that over the next few years the OFs graced the gravel and mud pitches of such other venues as Arenal, Benidorm, Lido de Jesolo and Puckpool on the Isle of Wight.

In 1974/75, the 1st XI reached the Senior Old Boys' cup final, which was a remarkable achievement as by now a number of their regular side were associate members and therefore ineligible to play in the Old Boys' competitions. This was a problem throughout all the sides in the club and often caused havoc with the Club's internal rules regarding the movement of players up and down teams. In the Senior cup final, the 1st XI, due to injuries and unavailability, found themselves without an eligible goalkeeper for the final. Finally, Bob Nixon, who last played for the Club's 4th XI four years earlier was persuaded to don his gloves one more time. Sadly it was all in vain as on the day the team played poorly and were soundly beaten 6-1 by Old Bromleians. Bob hung his boots up after that game and never played again. With the social side of the club still in full swing, attendances of nearly 200 were not unusual at club discos, often with people being turned away at the door. Also the 1974/75 season witnessed the first of a number of sponsored pub crawls which raised valuable funds for the football club. This first one visited the pubs of North Finchley High Road. Perhaps the alcohol consumption that season had an effect on the results because only the 2nd XI, under the captaincy of Roger Bone, triumphed by winning Junior Division 2.

The 1975/76 season saw Chas Willett's 5th XI win Minor Division D; they were also gaining the dubious reputation of being the regular winners of the nine o'clock count (most players still drinking at the club after nine pm on a Saturday). But it is by the first XI that a Club is judged and it had been 19 years since it had won anything, so it was with welcome relief when this season, under the leadership of Alan Nicholls, we won the double of Senior 2 and the Senior Cup. More pleasing was the fact that the cup was won by defeating Old Parmiterians from the first division 2-1, with goals from Brooks and Nicholls.

The beginning of the next season was marred by the tragic loss of Bobby Greer, a prodigious talent in the 1st XI, in a motor cycle accident. Subsequently the Bobby Greer Memorial Trophy for the Club's leading goal scorer was donated by his father and it almost became the personal property of Peter Moody who won it in seven of the next ten seasons. Once again Chas Willett was winning league titles, this time leading the 4th XI to the Minor Division C title. The other champions that year were Steve Charles' 6th XI who won Minor G.

The following season, Mick Wiffen's 2nd XI became champions of Junior 2 and reached the Final of the AFA Middlesex Intermediate Cup, going down 2-0 in extra time to Old Actonians. In this season Andy Barlow and Steve (Alby) Burt won SOL representative badges (five appearances for the representative side) – the first OFs for fifteen years. In subsequent years John Wilkes, Martin Barlow and Alan Nicholls also went on to receive representative honours.

The next first team success was not long in coming, as we finished the 78/79 season winning the supreme double of Senior One and the Senior Cup, which was achieved without conceding a single booking in the whole season. A remarkable feat even in those days! The Cup was won by

1st XI 1978/79 – Senior 1 & Senior Cup Winners
Left to right, *Back Row:*- A.Brooks, A.Barlow, S.Bullock, A. Burt, M.Priestley, B.Bovingdon, S.Johnston,
Front Row:- J.Davey, J.Wilkes, A.Nicholls, D.Kyte, M.Barlow.

defeating G.W.R. 2-0 (Brooks, Barlow M.). The league title was secured in a midweek match at Old Cholmeleians against holders Old Fairlopians, with Alan Brooks providing the necessary goals. The celebration lasted well into the early hours of the morning and an example of the friendship and trust between 'Chums' and ourselves was that we were left the keys to their bar.

The last season of the decade was again marred by an untimely death, this time of an old stalwart of the Club and its first Chairman, Dennis Wakefield, although his legacy lives on, having given his name to a short measure over the bar! But we saw out the decade in fine style. The 1st XI couldn't repeat their double from the previous season, but did manage to retain the Senior Cup by completely outplaying Parmiterians in a 3-0 victory (Barlow A, Berry,

Norris). This gave the 1st XI their third win in five seasons of the coveted trophy. The 3rd XI, captained by Peter Wiffen, won the Minor Cup Final against Old Woodhousians 2-0 a.e.t. (Dicker, Foster). while Chas Willet's magic touch proved to be still there when the 4th XI won the Old Boys' Cup for the first time by defeating Old Stationers 3-0 (Christianson 2, Marchant).

Good Club spirit socially and good team spirit tend to go hand in hand and so the 70s brought the success that the Club had yearned. Fifteen trophies were won during this decade which was more than the total number of trophies won up to that time, since the Club's inception. The success of the 1st XI in the seventies was not only down to having an excellent squad of players but also a fantastic team spirit which was fostered and led by Alan Nicholls, a most inspirational and exceptional captain.

Nostalgia is always apt to heighten memories but the 70s were a fun time with inter-Club pub game competitions, darts competitions, coach beanos, a horse drawn barge disco, the first of a number of dinner and dances and children's Christmas parties all adding to a fabulous sporting and social decade.

THE EIGHTIES……

In the early eighties the first eleven could not repeat their successes of the late seventies. Alan Nicholls was still captain and led them to the runner-up slot in Senior Division One in 1980/81, thanks in particular to 27 goals from Andy Barlow. Unfortunately the 2nd XI were relegated, but the 3rd XI began in great fashion reaching the Club's first full AFA Final under the leadership of Steve Astley. Sadly they were beaten by Southgate Olympic and also lost the Old Boys' Cup Final to Old Esthameians. Consolation, however, came in winning their division of the League. The only other success came from Roger Bone's 4th XI, who lifted the Mander Cup. It was to be their only high point of the season as sadly, they too were relegated. 1980/81 also saw the seventh team take its first tentative steps, thanks to the efforts of Chris Hannington and Anil Varma when it played its first friendlies, and the following year they played their first league games.

Alan's last year as first team skipper, 1981/82, was blank as well, although the team did reach the Final of the SOL Senior Cup, losing 1-2 to St. Mary's College in a match played at Hendon FC. Unfortunately, the 3rd XI, with Ian Goodwin at the helm, couldn't repeat their success from the previous year and narrowly avoided relegation due to a bad run of results after Christmas. However, Terry Marchant took over the fourth team and they easily won Minor Division C, suffering only two defeats in the process. Elikos Elias scored 27 goals during the season.

The 4th XI took Minor B the following year by six points, although defeat came in the Mander Cup Final, 0-1 against Catford Wanderers. This was to be one of five cup finals that the club reached in the season – losing all five of them. Martin Barlow's 1st team were runners-up in the League, lost the Final of the League Cup to Old Fairlopians in a replay, and lost in the Final of the Old Boys' Cup against Old Salesians played at .....Old Salesians. Andy Barlow once again proved his enormous talent with 36 goals. Tony Davis now in charge of 2nd team saw them through to promotion by finishing as runners-up in Junior Division 2. This success was to be short lived as the were to go straight back down again the following season, mainly due to winning only one game after Christmas. For the veterans, victory came in the Old Boys' Cup, beating Old Salesians in the final.

1983/4 was a bleak year, ending a run of nine years of success. Both the first and second teams were relegated. For the first team, losing the first four matches set the pattern for the season, although they did reach the Quarter-Finals of the AFA Senior Cup, losing to the eventual winners, Old Esthameians. One bright spot for the season came from the 7th XI clinching the Minor H title. In addition, 1983/4 saw the Megavets, (the over 45's), make their debut, losing 1-0 to Bourneside.

Steve 'Alby' Burt took over the captaincy in 1984/85, but had to retire through injury – Andy Barlow replaced him but just failed to lead the side to promotion. But success for the Reserves, now under Steve Signy, in what came to be known as 'the lost weekend'. In the April of 1985 they met the students of St Mary's College in the League Cup Final – Mickey Gillings and Tony Davis scored for the OF's, and Steve Martin saved a penalty to enable the 'fatties' to beat the 'fitties' 2-1. Alas, the celebrations went on long into the Saturday night for both players and supporters as the following day on the Sunday the team (and supporters) had to trek down to Ewell for the Old Boys' Cup Final against Old Bromleians – Mickey Gillings again scored but the legs gave out and the Kent side won by the same score.

2nd XI 1984/85 – SOL Junior Cup Winners & Old Boys Runners-Up
Left to right, *Back Row:*- P.Mayer, L.Cousins, P.Wiffen, S.Bullock, M.Gillings, P.Harle, *Front Row:*- G.Finnie, A.Davis, S.Signy(Capt.), S.Martin, H.Sandhu, B.Spellman.

The Club had always longed to win Junior Division 3, if only to see how much beer the trophy would hold! We found out a month later in May 1985 when Tom Jones' third team won the division by one point from Old Parmiterians – the lid of the trophy alone holding four and a half pints!

Success at last returned to the top side in the 85/86 season, when the Old Boys' Cup was lifted by the 1st team for the first time in 30 years – Peter Harle and Paul Solari

1st XI 1985/6 – Old Boys' Cup Winners
Left to right, *Back Row:*- P.Bolton, P.Harle, P.Solari, N.Burt, K.Binns, T.Newton, J.Bolton.
Front Row:- A.Schwarz, M.Barlow, T.Davey, A.Barlow, A.Nicholls.

scoring extra-time goals in the defeat of Old Minchendenians, but Senior Division 2 still proved elusive to escape from. The 2nd XI couldn't match the success of the previous season and finished only in mid-table in Junior 2. Success also returned to the Veterans as they claimed the S.O.L cup beating Old Parmiterians in a replay. This was to be the first in a run of 5 cup victories in consecutive years for the over 35s.

1986/87 began on the right note for the Club with the 1st team achieving a 3-1 victory in the first ever Vic Merrett Trophy over Old Brentwoods, and it led to winning Senior Two by eight points (two for a win in those days!). Lee Cousins' 27 goals inspired the 2nd XI the following season, but they were just pipped for promotion. The only other success that season came from the Veterans in the Old Boys' Cup with a 3-0 win over Old Minchendenians, including two goals from Terry Marchant, enabling Geoff Owen, at 53, to lift the trophy. It was during this season that Peter Moody, a prolific goal scorer for the Club over the years, hit his 500th goal for the Old Finchleians.

It was billed as the greatest day in the Club's history, but it didn't expect to have two! 1987/88 saw the 1st XI reach its first-ever AFA Senior Cup Final. Old Aloysians were the opponents, and a large, boisterous crowd saw Finchleians fight back from 3-1 down to earn a creditable 3-3 draw against the holders. OF's scored first in the replay, but Aloysians took the game into extra-time and, with penalties looming, clinched victory with virtually the last kick of the match. The side won the Old Boys' Cup, beating Old Parkonians comfortably by a 3-0 scoreline, but lost the League Cup Final to Mill Hill Village due to a poor team performance. The Veterans, mid way through their successful run, lifted the London Old Boys' Cup by rather fortunately beating Old Danes 1-0 at our previously unlucky venue, Old Camdenians.

Kevin Binns took over from Andy Barlow as 1st team skipper for the next season, but the retirement of a number of key players and injuries meant a trying time. The second team began 1987/88 in the most dreadful fashion, going a goal down to Parkfield after only four seconds of the season and once again found themselves firmly fixed in the second division. The only trophy for the club this season was to be won by the Veterans beating East Barnet in the final of the Old Boys' Cup.

A most significant decision in 1989/90 was taken by Alan Nicholls to introduce an eighth team, comprising boys from Christ's College which has subsequently paid innumerable dividends to the Club. Brian Fletcher, headmaster at that time, offered the use of the school mini-bus and Alan, along with Bob Leeds, formed the side which in its debut season finished in the bottom half of Minor Division F. The decade finished on a high note for the 2nd XI, when under the captaincy of Harj Sandhu, master of the dangerous back-pass, the side won the division by five points. Under Chas Willett, the 5th XI reached the Semi-Final of the AFA Cup and finished third in the League finally getting success by beating Old Salesians 3-2 in the final of the Old Boys' Invitation Cup. The veterans finished their successful five year consecutive run with a victory over Old Fairlopians in the SOL Cup.

We said goodbye to a number of people during the decade. Reg Mander, the 'father' of the Club, passed away in the Spring of 1983. Phil Molloy retired after 22 years of service as Results Secretary in 1985 – in his time he had also been Fixture Secretary and was also the means by which many players would join the OF's from the school, through being hi-jacked on a Saturday morning! Jeremy 'Reg' Kilby also moved away in 1985 – he had served the Club in a number of positions. It was thanks to people like these and many others that the club has always been very strong on the administrative side. This contributed greatly to the club being awarded the honour of winning the K.B. Elbourne Award for the first time in its history in 1986/87. This award was presented by the Southern Olympian League based on a Club's record of discipline, sportsmanship, hospitality and administration in honour of Ken Elbourne, an Old Finchleian himself.

K.B Elbourne Trophy

3rd XI 1995/96 – Junior 1 & Junior Cup Winners
Left to right, *Back Row:*- C.Banks, D.O'Hare, M.Cable, O.Fatani, M.Barlow, P.McDonagh, C.Chandler,
Front Row:- P.Carroll, G.Finnie, M.Rawal (Capt), P.Kinsella, K.Binns.

THE NINETIES……

The first season of the decade led to an April shower of trophies, beginning with the Saturday Veterans beating Old Bromleians, rather fortuitously, on penalties, to win the Old Boys' Cup. Gordon Finnie's fourth team did the double – firstly they came from behind to beat Mill Hill Village 3-1 in the Mander Cup Final, and later met the same opposition in the 'decider' for Junior 3, winning 2-1 with a late winner from Lee Cousins. The first team went down 2-0 to St. Mary's College in the SOL Senior Cup Final. Thane Little, Steve Martin, John Kenny and Martin Barlow all represented the Southern Olympian League and Vince Kelly received his AFA Representative badge.

The following season Lee Cousins scored all four goals in the Final, as the 4th XI beat Mill Hill Village to retain the Mander Cup. This was scant reward as they were also to lose in the Finals of both the AFA and Old Boys' Cups, on each occasion to Old Esthameians, and to make things worse, Gordon's team finished runners-up in Junior Division 2. Lee Cousins finished as the Club leading goalscorer scoring 51 times including eight hat-tricks. The schoolboys of the 8th XI, under the guidance and leadership of Alan Nicholls and Bob Leeds, won Minor Division F and the Old Boys' Cup beating our own Saturday Veterans in the Final. The boys were also to take part in the first international at Southover that year when they held the USA Midwest youth side to a 0-0 draw.

In 1993, Bob Leeds took over as secretary from Mick Wiffen, who had done an excellent job for many years, and by way of an omen the Club didn't win a single trophy. The following year the Club decided that the much needed drainage work should be carried out on the bottom pitch and consequently the 1st XI had to play all their home matches at Oakhill Park. New skipper Pat McDonagh had a torrid time of it and they were relegated from Senior Division 1. On a brighter note the 3rd XI won Junior Division 1 and the new crop of schoolboys won Minor E, with Ray Casey and Pat Kinsella scoring 78 goals between them.

1994/95 was dominated by the exploits of the 5th XI. Brian Bell's team had a sweet and sour season; they won Junior 3 as well as The Old Boys' Cup, beating Old Stationers 3-2, but lost in both the AFA and League Cup Finals..

By way of a contrast to a couple of rather lean seasons, 1995/96 was an absolute bumper season. To celebrate 50 years at Southover the Club took part in no less than nine Cup Finals! The 1st XI, with Mick Ward back in charge, were champions of Senior Division 2. The Reserves lost in the Final of the Old Boys' Cup to East Barnet Old Grammarians on penalties, while the 3rd XI enjoyed a fantastic season, winning Junior 1 as well as the League Cup, beating Hampstead Heathens 4-0 in the Final. The 4th XI were losing finalists to Albanian in the Mander Cup and Brian Bell's 5th XI retained the Old Boys' Cup, overcoming Old Suttonians 2-1. Mick Milner took over the captain's job for the 6th XI and he also had a great season. They beat Old Bealonians 5-2 in the League Cup Final on "Pork Chop Hill" but lost to Old Owens 4-1 in the Old Boys' Cup Final and to Old Tollingtonians 6th XI in the AFA Intermediate Novets Cup Final at Norsemen. The work on the pitches had paid dividends, and that season the Club staged three Cup Finals at Southover, as well as a Southern Olympian League representative match against The Old Boys' League. Success on the field was echoed off it and come Saturday night Southover was the place to be, with the bar packed out well into the evening.

March 15, 1997 will go down in the history of The Old Finchleians' Football Club, as the day we won our first AFA Final, as Jason Pye led the 3rd XI to victory in the Junior Cup, Jason himself getting a hat-trick, as we beat Old Bealonians 4-2 in extra time. They lost in the Final of the League Cup, coincidentally to Old Bealonians, and Jason was to finish the season as top scorer with an amazing 62 goals to his name. Elsewhere, the 1st XI, under

3rd XI 1996/97 – AFA Junior Cup Winners
Left to right, *Back Row:*- J.Kelly, J.Babalola, P.O'Mahoney, D.Briffa, R.Bryan, M.Holland, R.Caabay, C.Chandler,
Front Row:- T.Okoh, C.Christie, G.Finnie, P.McDonagh, J.Pye (Capt.), M.Barlow, A.Ali.

new manager, Bob Leeds, were runners-up in Senior 1 and Manesh Rawal's Reserve side also finished runners-up in Intermediate 2. Steve Wise took over the 4th XI and had an up and down season as they beat Ealing Association 4-1 to win the Mander Cup, but lost to Old Owens 1-0 in the Old Boys' Cup. They were also runners-up in Junior Division 2. Mick Milner once again had a successful season with the 6th XI despite being sidelined most of the season through injury. They won the Old Boys' Cup beating Old Tenisonians 4-3 in the Final, and also won the Thomas Parmiter Cup. The Veterans also won the SOL Cup 2-0 over Centymca.

Season 1997/98 was to be our last in the Southern Olympian League, as after many years of trying, we were accepted into the Southern Amateur Football League. In a lot of ways it was sad to leave the SOL after so many happy years and where we had made innumerable friends. We left the SOL with our heads held high in the full knowledge that as a Club we had supported the League wholeheartedly for almost 70 years. It was felt that the SAL would offer better opportunities and we were all relishing the challenges ahead.

That season, the Club were to win seven trophies in all, the 1st XI leading the way by finishing top of the pile in Senior 1, bringing the title back to Southover for the first time in over twenty years. They were also losing finalists in both the AFA and SOL Senior Cups. The Reserves were also champions, winning Intermediate 1 for the first time in our history which was particularly pleasing as captain Paul Tanner had suffered a nasty leg break midway through the season. Che Christie's 3rd XI finished with a record, which is probably the best in the Club's history. They walked away with Intermediate 3 losing only one league game all season. They beat Old Bealonians 3-1 to win the Old Boys' Cup as well as beating Old Colfeians 2-1 to win the League Cup. In all they scored 147 goals conceding just 16. John Murray was their leading scorer with 42 goals, including five hat-tricks. The 4th XI also won an Old Boys' Cup, coming from behind to beat Glyn Old Boys 4-3, Jason Pye scoring a hat-trick in his second consecutive Final.

Having waited 97 years for an AFA cup triumph, it wasn't long before another came our way. This time it was Brian Bell's turn as his 5th XI overcame Old Meadonians 5-1 to win The AFA Senior Novets Cup. The Megavets (over 45's) played three fixtures during the season. They beat Old Stationers, drew with Old Fincunians and lost to Bourneside. We also staged an AFA Cup Final at Southover for the first time, when Midland Bank beat Silhill in the Minor Cup.

Our first season in the Southern Amateur League was by far the most successful in the Old Finchleians' history, the Club winning no less than ten trophies. The 1st XI led the way, at last winning the AFA Senior Cup. The holders

1st XI 1998/99 – AFA Senior Cup & Old Boys Cup Winners
Left to right, *Back Row:*- U.Egbe, D.Bickers, J.Strong, S.Evans, A.Diston, J.Plaistow, T.Little, S.Davis, M.Abrey, B.Leeds. *Front Row:*- D.Gregory, C.Sharpe, C.Flinn, P.Davey, A.Dale, P.Sogbodjor, P.Kinsella.

Old Aloysians were beaten 2-1 in the Quarter-Finals, before we overcame 1998 winners, Civil Service 4-2 in the semi's and so to the Final against the Honourable Artillery Company. On a beautiful spring afternoon we went a goal down, but an Andy Dale hat trick before the break helped them to bring the Senior Cup to Southover for the first time.

After the Lord Mayor's show Old Tenisonians were beaten 3-2 after extra time in the Old Boys' Final and we were also to gain promotion from Senior 3 as runners-up. Lee Crocker was the first OF to be presented with an SAL Representative tie. Che Christie skippered the Reserves as they won Division 3 and Dave Stevens went one better with the 3rd XI, winning Division 3 and the Old Boys' Cup, defeating East Barnet 3-2 in the Final at Southover. Paul Carroll led the 4ths to the Division 3 championship, losing just one match in the process, while Brian Bell's 5th XI did not lose a match as they also won the 3rd Division. Also, they were only narrowly beaten 2-1 by Polytechnic in the AFA Senior Novets Final. The 6th XI under Mark Ward and the 8th XI under Fred Best both won their divisions and Dan Merryweather's 7th XI were unlucky to finish as runners-up in both the League and Old Boys' Cup. The Veterans did well to reach both the London Old Boys' and The Old Boys' Invitation Cup Finals, but alas were to meet a very strong Old Tenisonians on each occasion and finished runners-up twice. On top of this the Club were proud winners of the inaugural AFA Referees Society Hospitality Award. All in all, a fantastic season which saw the Club score 900 goals.

Season 1999/2000 and the trophies kept on coming as six out of the eight sides were promoted into Division 1 and four sides won a League and Cup double. Terry O'Donnell captained the Reserves as they won Division 2 and the Old Boys' Cup, beating Old Tenisonians 3-0 in the Final. Paul Carroll's 4th XI won Division 2 and romped the Old Boys' Cup by beating Old Wilsonians 7-2 in the Final, schoolboy Metin Kayim netting four times. The 6th XI,

OFFC Centenary photograph 2001

captained by Mark Ward, also lost only once as they ran away with the League title and easily won the Old Boys' Cup beating local rivals Old Stationers by 9-1 in the Final. The fourth "double" went to Dan Merryweather's 7th XI, who won the League on the last day of the season by beating Old Parmiterians 5-1. They also won the Old Boys' Cup at Southover defeating Fred Best's 8th XI, the match an all Finchleian affair as Pat Heaphy, Bob Salter and Ian Goodwin officiated and Mick Wiffen presented the trophy. The Old Boys' Cup committee had forgotten all about it! The 3rds and 5ths were also promoted as runners-up.

1999/2000 also saw the introduction of Youth football to the Finchleians, when Andy Diston and Pete Kyrillou ran a team in the now defunct Borehamwood and District League. They were successful in winning the Ace Awards Cup, the Challenge Cup and finished runners-up in the League. This expanded in 2000/01, and our under-14 side won Division 2 of the Bushey Friendly League and the under-13s the Challenge Cup. Around six players are with football academies and three boys took part in the AFA under-16 trials early this season. As well as success with trophies, the hope is that we will attract the players of the future to the Club.

Clearly the nineties have represented the most successful period in the playing history of the Club and much of this is down to having an excellent selection of captains and the hard work of a number people often working behind the scenes to make sure that things run smoothly. With this sound base, the future of the Club had never looked brighter and so we moved on and into the new Millennium.

2000 AND BEYOND……

In total contrast to how we ended the last millennium, 2000/01 was a real "annus horribilis" – it rained, it rained some more and then it rained again! None of our sides really got started, and it didn't help matters that the first team captaincy changed hands three times before Simon Ward took over and managed to steer the side clear of relegation. Paul Carroll's 4ths lost just once but were still to finish runners-up in Division 1 and Billy Russell's 5th's lost on penalties to Old Actonians in the AFA Senior Novets Cup Final, but disruptions and then double-headers, meant that for the first time in a decade the Club finished a season without a trophy.

Centenary Illuminated Address

The following season being our centenary, was celebrated with a number of specially organised events. The group photograph adorning the wall at Southover was taken during a gathering of 165 past and present players on 31st March 2001. The Football Section Annual Dinner was relocated to the West End, namely the Connaught Rooms WC1, where we were honoured to receive the illuminated address from the FA. A Centenary Dinner and Dance at the Apollo Suite Cockfosters followed in the New Year and was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

Back on the field, the previous season fortunately proved to be only a minor hiccup as the 2001/02 season saw us back once more into winning ways with a bagful of trophies. The 3rds, 4ths, 5ths and 7ths all won their various

5th XI 2001/2 – SAL Division 1 & Old Boys Cup Winners, AFA Cup Runners-Up

Left to right, *Back Row:*- T.Wren, B.Russell, A.Are, J.Sloss, J.Lewis, A.Laycock, A.Martin, D.Satterthwaite,
Front Row:- R.Banks, P.Philbey(Capt), P.McDonagh, D.Rush .

Vets XI 2002/3 – London Old Boys Vets Cup Winners
Left to right, *Back Row:*- J.Strong, P.Davey, M.Barlow, J.Lewis, A.Diston, A.Milligan, P.Tanner, *Front Row:*- J.Davey, S.Crawford, G.Finnie(Capt), A.Dale, D.Stevens, T.O'Donnell.

SAL divisions, with the 4ths and 5ths making it a double winning season for them by both winning their respective Old Boys Cups. The 2nd team rounded off a fantastic season when they also won the Old Boys Junior Cup.

Finally to 2002/03 and the last season reported here in this Centenary booklet. Not maybe one of our very best but still sprinkled with a handful of trophies at the end of a season and proof of the strength in depth that the club has, with both the 8ths and 9ths winning their minor divisions of the SAL. The 3rds and 4ths both won the Old Boys Cup, the 4ths retaining the trophy that they had won the previous year. The Vets, not to be outdone, once again tasted success by winning the Jack Perry Memorial Trophy.

As someone who played competitive football at the Old Finchleians for some 30 years, putting together this piece on the football section has rekindled, in me, a host of sweet memories. I trust, for all you current and ex-footballers who thumb through these pages, that you too find something of interest.

If the next 100 years are as good as the last, then our future generations have much to look forward to!

J.W.

CHAPTER 7:

CRICKET

Old Boys of Christ's College, Finchley have played cricket together for as long as there have been Old Boys of Christ's College, and by 1885 the Old Finchleians CC had fixtures with many senior Clubs of the day.

The spring of 1904 saw the founding of "The Finchleian Club", its name at that time, it being established with its main objects of sports and social intercourse which are still to the fore today. J.B. Goodyear, a prominent force in the main Club's formation, was appointed secretary of cricket the same year, even before the Club had elected its first president and so the cricket section is as old as the Club itself.

Two matches were played in 1905, both against the school and the first designated "Speech Day" game was played in 1907. The same year the first match against Finchley took place, ending in a draw. From 1908 the school ground was made available to the OFs and in that year two OF XIs played the school 1st and 2nd XIs, ending in one victory each.

A.R. Stephenson succeeded J.B. Goodyear as captain in 1909 and by the following year the fixture list had grown to twelve matches. With more games being played it led to the most successful season to date in 1911, with nine victories in sixteen fixtures. Brothers Eddie and Fred Taaffe, both of whom later played for Australian States, were the backbone of the side.

Cricket continued to develop but the outbreak of war put an end to OF cricket for five years. The Speech Day games were revived in 1919 but apart from those there was no other OF cricket until 1925, its re-birth being due to J. Codd, D.T. Turner, G.M. Turner and H.H. Quinton, with Codd elected captain.

There was only limited availability of the school ground which presented problems arranging fixtures but due to the efforts of Martin Turner sixteen games were played that year. The first century recorded for the OFs was 142 against Mill Hill scored by D.T. Turner.

The formation of the 2nd XI was in 1927 under the captaincy of D.A.W. Turner (no relation), with, among others, Aldo Barberi making his debut that year. He was later to compile the commentary for OF cricket in the Golden Jubilee Book in 1954 on which these early passages of history are based.

Ray Parker took over the captaincy in 1930 from Dudley Turner, who had moved to Buckinghamshire, a position he held until 1946 when he retired from cricket. He was to oversee some successful years for OF cricket. 1931 saw Parker and Frank Kittel put on 170 for the first wicket against Britannic House, a record partnership for any OF wicket at that time. The following year Parker scored 1,255 runs in the season for an average of 41 and Hamish Eadie took 100 wickets at 12.3 each, being well supported by fast bowler M.A. Monck. The only known occasion of an OF bowler taking all ten wickets in an innings also occurred during this period with Frank Kittel taking 10 for 35 against Furness, Holder, Prince.

Up to the Second World War, with a young side, OF cricket flourished but with only being able to play away fixtures without the facility to offer return games it made it increasingly difficult to improve the fixture list. In 1940 no second team matches were played and that proved to be the last season for all OF cricket until 1945 when some scratch OF sides were raised to play matches at Totteridge and Woodside Park and two school games.

The following year the section started properly again, playing away fixtures, but in 1947 a ground of our own at Southover and a new era for OF cricket. 2nd XI matches were also started again.

A full fixture list was gradually built up for the two elevens, playing both on Saturday and Sunday and in 1949

the first cricket week was arranged. Geoff Whaite, vice captain to H.W. Baker, was the most consistent run-getter in the post war years and in 1948 had what must be the most successful season ever enjoyed by an OF, with over 1,700 runs, including four centuries, and an average in the seventies. He continued to dominate the OF's batting for several years until Geoff Levy took over the mantle. Levy recorded his first OF century in 1952 with 113* against Woodside Park and with 120 against North Mymms in 1955 he topped 1,000 runs that year.

The dominant bowler of this period, and for many years following, was Peter Frazer. Taking nine wickets for the first time in the win over Finchley in August 1950, there followed seven further nine wicket hauls over the next twenty years. A century of wickets taken in a season was first achieved in 1952, with 112, peaking at 137 (av. 9.6) in 1957 and passing the magic "100" seven times in all. Three batting hundreds were also made in this period, surely making him the greatest all rounder to ever play for the OFs.

During the "fifties" most seasons saw OFs win more

OF Cricket XI – 1957

Left to right, *Back Row:*- L.F.Hodge, A.H.Lewis, D.D.Graham, B.J.Walder, R.F.Sharp, K.Eldred, P.R.Frazer,
Front Row:- G.L.Blacktop, G.P.Levy, G.J.Harwood, J.Friend, A.Duke.

games than they lost and the fixture list became stronger during that period. The captaincy had now passed to D.D.N. Graham and he gradually rebuilt the side after Whaite moved away in 1954, then passing it to G.J.A. Harwood and followed by Levy taking the helm in 1958. Levy and Frazer were still the backbone of the side but with the younger element fielding was sharper and Graham Blacktop's wicketkeeping dismissals were an integral part, regularly taking thirty or more per season, peaking with 57 victims in 1957.

Dennis Graham recorded three centuries himself, with others by Brian Walder and Andrew James who made 133 against Christ's College and 110 against Old Stationers, both in 1959. John Friend took 9 for 38 against Totteridge in May 1955, and at the fall of the ninth wicket Ken Hughes, the Totteridge captain, declared the innings closed!

Roy Sharp had an analysis of 9 overs, 8 maidens, 1 run and 5 wickets against Old Meadonians in August 1956 and Frazer and T.G. English bowled out Old Owens for 21 in September 1958. Gordon Harwood achieved the astonishing feat of five wickets in six balls, spread over two overs, including a hat trick, against Finchley in August 1960.

The best season recorded to date for results was 1961 when 25 matches were won out of a total 47 matches played, but with only 7 defeats. Frazer (105) and Harwood (95) dominated the wicket taking and seven batsmen topped 500 runs for the season, Roy Sharp made the only century, with Blacktop having 54 victims behind the stumps. The highlight of the season was probably dismissing Finchley on their own ground for 32 (Frazer 6 for 14), OFs first win there since 1946.

Len Clark hit the first of his three OF centuries in 1962, aggregating 1,109 runs for the season (av. 34.7) and also taking 40 wickets. As vice captain to Roy Sharp in 1963 they steered the Club to improve the record by one to 26 victories in a season and with a stronger fixture list.

For the OF 2nd XI regular Saturday and Sunday fixtures did not re-start until 1949 and the size and strength of the fixtures built up from there. The captaincy passed from Dudley Turner to Aldo Barberi and on to Alan Duke in 1952, with a record thirteen wins being achieved that year. Keith Eldred, Neil Leslie, John Friend, Neil Webber and Derek Doe, along with Duke, made their presence felt, to be followed by Jeff Baines, John Follis, Don Merritt, Eric Roe and Ron Dunton.

Ex first team players moving down were David Sparrow and Frank Kittel, while Harvey Peters made his debut, later to feature in the first team. In 1956, after four years with Duke in charge, Gordon Wilson took over as captain and induced keenness and team spirit which soon produced positive results. 1957 brought 17 wins and was surpassed in 1959 with 20 victories. The bowling of Leslie (just missing 100 wickets in 1956) and Sparrow was the mainstay of the side with Friend and Dunton the leading batsmen. David Meyrick, Norman Teague and Paul Burgess all served their apprenticeships before moving up to the 1st XI whilst Charlie (H.W.) Baker played some fine innings in his swan-song years.

In 1961 Alan Duke returned to the second team captaincy after being vice captain of the firsts but had to see the side through a difficult period with the loss of a number of players. Duke was a tower of strength as an all-rounder and in 1963 master batsman Bob Fry came out of retirement to play some games. He was a a fine example to the young guns of their day on the way up to the first team, with Roger Mace, Roger Yowart, Micky Hoyle, Nigel Morgan and John Pitt all full of promise and Francis Calder improving behind the stumps.

One of the best 2nd XI matches of the era was at Walthamstow in 1960 who raced to 200 for 1 in just over two hours. Meyrick, Eldred and Andrews knocked off the

runs in 119 minutes. At the other end of the scale was a game against Northumbrian in 1953 when OF's 2nd XI were dismissed for 34. David Sparrow took 7 for 13 in reply and the result was a quite extraordinary tie.

The celebration of sixty years of Old Finchleians cricket in 1964 saw the compilation of the Diamond Jubilee Booklet, a great source of information and records which has been of tremendous value. Donations were sought to cover the costs and the surplus was made available to go towards the construction of a pair of new sight-screens at Southover. Celebratory matches that year were marred by poor weather but some play was possible in the Jubilee Match against John Friend's Presidential XI and a report appeared in the next morning's edition of the Daily Telegraph, next to E.W. Swanton's account of the Trent Bridge Test Match.

1964 was a pretty moderate season on paper – 17 wins, 15 defeats – but was nevertheless highlighted by Howard Deaton's run tally of 827 whilst Len Clark totalled 824 and missed the last few games through injury. On the bowling front Peter Frazer captured 100 wickets for the final time, even though playing only once a week. The most exciting matches were both at Southover when OFs nearly defended a meagre total of 86 against Highgate only to lose by one wicket and then lost by the same margin against Finchley. The 2nd XI had a similar season in terms of results and it is worth mentioning the game at Hounslow who scored 207 for 3 in 115 minutes and confidently gave OFs ten minutes more for their reply. John Pitt and Bruce Mercer added 78 in only 40 minutes and then with the last pair together and one over to go, Phil Molloy hit a six off the first ball and the match was won with one ball to spare.

The weather dominated in 1965. No fewer than eleven 1st XI matches were cancelled or abandoned, including a trip to Banstead in fine weather only to be greeted by a thunderstorm. It was same again on the batting front with Howard Deaton narrowly missing out on 1,000 runs. In the 2nd XI young Bruce Mercer showed promise with the bat, reaching nearly 500 runs. Unfortunately, after a nasty injury at Woodside Park, Gordon Wilson announced his retirement but agreed to continue as Team Secretary, Press Secretary and occasional umpire. The weather hardly improved in 1966 – a fifth of the games were cancelled or abandoned. It makes the achievement by the regular openers Len Clark (952) and Howard Deaton (888) scoring over 1,800 runs between them on wickets which were described as invariably wet and never hard even more remarkable. Phil Gould, still at CCF, had a very promising first season and Derek Palmer an excellent 1st XI debut with 6 for 31 against Totteridge.

OF Cricket 1st XI – 1965

Left to right, *Back Row:*- L.F.Hodge, F.J.M.Calder, G.P.Levy, A.James, R.M.G.Yowart, G.J.A.Harwood, R.Mace, Mrs.M.Deaton,
Front Row:- A.H.Lewis, H.G.Deaton, R.F.Sharp, L.J.Clark, P.R.Frazer.

Geoff Levy took on the captaincy again in the mid sixties and scored over 1,000 runs in 1967. A bright prospect for the future was the CCF 1st XI Captain, Chris Owen, who made a dozen or so 1st XI appearances and met with success both with bat and ball, including a match winning partnership with Frazer to defeat Mill Hill. Frazer, only playing on Sundays, took five wickets in a match twelve times and won the "Hendon Times" bowling award. The 2nd XI beat probably their strongest opponents, North London II, but generally suffered through some of the better players not being regularly available.

The new Clubhouse was ready for the 1968 season and this was the same year as the formation of the Hertfordshire Cricket Competition, a league which OFs joined in 1969, achieving a mid table position. It was a mixed year which saw a score of just 26 recorded at Berkhamsted. Howard Deaton scored his first OF century in 1968 with 105 against Finchley and went on to be the first winner of the George Buist Cricketer of the Year trophy for the Club. Mike Harvey's 139* at Totteridge was his second century of 1970 and the highest for OFs since the war. Phil Gould captured 107 wickets the same season and represented the Club Cricket Conference XI three times that year.

After coming 31st in the league in 1971, in spite of 106 wickets in the season for Gould and a unique feat in taking two hat-tricks in the season by Roger Yowart, under the new leadership of John Gunson a dramatic improvement was achieved the following year, with third place. However, the highlight of the year was at the end of season Jack Robertson six-a-side tournament held at North Middlesex in October. After seeing off Hendon Buccaneers and Alexandra Park there was a semi final win over an Enfield side which included M.J. Smith of Middlesex (bowled by Gould). Northampton Exiles were the opponents in the final who had put out Finchley in their semi. Exiles scored 45 off their five overs but Mick Muncer and Roger Yowart knocked off the runs without loss and with an over to spare. A taste of success under John Gunson and vice captain Derek Palmer, with Roger Mace completing the victorious sextet.

This led to what must be the greatest achievement by any OFs cricket team, past or present, when on 23rd

OF Cricket 1st XI, Hertfordshire Cricket Competition Winners – 1973
Left to right, *Back Row:*- L.F.Hodge, M.Muncer, A.H.Lewis, S.P.Betteridge, P.Gould, P.A.Johnson, G.P.Levy, G.M.Wilson,
Front Row:- R.Mace, P.R.Frazer, J.K.Gunson (Capt), P.M.Davis R.M.Yowart.

September 1973 Old Finchleians 1st XI won the Hertfordshire Cricket Competition. The foundations set the previous year continued, winning their first seven league matches, going on to twelve wins and only three defeats of twenty-one league matches played. In the whole season of fifty matches there were only seven defeats. The strength of the team was its bowling, with Gould, Frazer, Pat Johnson, Palmer, Gunson and Steve Bettridge all taking forty or more wickets in the season and conceding only 2.6 runs per over on average. Gould had two eight wicket hauls. Although no centuries were scored, there were 27 fifties and Gunson led from the front with bat and ball, topping the batting averages and being undefeated in fifteen innings. At the end of the season the team were losing finalists in the six-a-side tournament.

The 2nd XI played a supporting role and John Theed emerged as the inaugural winner of the Gordon Wilson 2nd XI Cricketer of the Year with 108 wickets (av. 11.6) including four seven wicket hauls and a best of 8 for 41. In the bowling department he was ably supported by skipper Steve Langham (86 wickets) who recorded the remarkable figures of 10.3 overs, 10 maidens, 5 wickets (all bowled) for 0 runs, against Hayes. Regulars at this time also included Jeff Richardson-Hill, Peter Bounsall, Phil Molloy, Jeff Baines and Alan Duke.

Maybe it was the shock of Old Finchleians winning the league but 1974 saw the start of a breakaway league of some of the top "town sides" from the Hertfordshire Cricket Competition to form a new Herts League. OFs remained in the "Competition", achieving sixth place, with highlights being 100 by Levy against Dunstable and 8 for 45 by Johnson against Watford Town. John Gunson stood down from the captaincy at the end of the season after three successful years at the helm.

The 2nd XI reached their highest league position so far, coming eighth and Theed again dominated topping batting and bowling averages and taking 9 for 26 against Radlett. For his amazing season he won the George Buist Cricketer of the Year trophy covering the whole Club, the first and only time a 2nd XI player has won it.

The next two years saw two of the hottest summers of modern times but also at the end of the 1975 season the death of Leslie Hodge, a Club and Cricket Section stalwart who had been a regular umpire for the best part of thirty

years. That season Mick Muncer recorded 941 runs and Phil Gould 113 wickets and the first 2nd XI century for many years by Ian Morris at West Essex.

On 30th May 1976 at Southover in a match against North Middlesex there was what must be the greatest ever innings recorded by an OF's cricketer. Roger Yowart smashed his way to 161 runs in 109 minutes off 90 balls, containing 14 fours and 11 sixes. Awesome!

That season Paul Davis had nearly 50 victims behind the stumps for the 1st XI. Gunson was still going strong with 101 wickets in 1977 and a further 97 the following year. Roger Yowart continued to be the scourge of bowlers with 121* against Watford Town the same year and Mick Muncer totalled 943 runs for the season.

Phil Molloy had taken over as 2nd XI captain in 1976 and the next few years saw Ted Fudge and Geoff Levy, moving down from the firsts, to share the role. Levy spent a total of eight seasons in the 2nd XI contributing seventeen half centuries during that period before retirement. Peter Bounsall was also in the runs with 514 in 1976, including one century, and another one the following season. Also in 1977, behind the stumps, Jim Wallace had 42 dismissals to his name.

In spite of some good individual performances the strength of the Club had diminished since the heady days of 1973. The 1976 season had seen 25 defeats for the 2nd XI and in 1979, the Club's 75th season, it proved to be one of the worst on record. The 1st XI won just 5 (of 39) matches and the 2nd XI 6 (of 34). The summer of 1979 was also poor in terms of weather with 23 matches cancelled, including the two matches cried off by Finchley (both at short notice), not being able to raise a side twice, and so perhaps OFs were not the only cricket club to be suffering.

The following years continued to be a struggle, with the captaincy of both XIs constantly changing and successes at a premium. This was highlighted by the 2nd XI recording an unheard of four wins in a row during 1980 and it was commemorated by the printing of a memorial T-shirt recording the fact.

Most of the successful championship side of 1973 had either retired or moved on ten years later but Steve Bettridge continued to ply his "left arm over" trade recording two sets of astonishing figures, firstly in 1982 against Ruislip with 23 11 32 9, and the following year at Fives and Heronians with 16 14 5 3. Jeremy ("Reg") Kilby scored the first OF century for six years with 101* against Northwood Town.

Although results were not so good the spirit of the Club remained intact and after a gap of many years at the end of the 1984 season a dinner was held by the cricket section at the Clubhouse. That season saw the G.L. Blacktop Performance of the Year trophy awarded to a 2nd XI player, quite rare at that time. On 1st September Jim Wallace took a weak side to high flying Leverstock Green and only a second wicket partnership of 98 between Wallace (71) and Jonathan Rowley (30) saw the 2nd XI to a respectable 140 all out. The home side were rolled over for 116 with Rowley taking 5 for 31 and deservedly receiving the award. Move on nineteen years to 2003 and he won the trophy again with a match winning 95* at Radlett.

The struggle of recent years to field two teams and the deteriorating strength of both sides led to an emergency meeting being held during the 1985 season to decide whether the Club could continue to field two sides. The important decision taken was to continue to do so and it was to the credit of the team secretaries of that era getting out teams as best they could and 2nd XI captains of the period, Jim Wallace, Ian Morris, Roger Bone, Steve Signy and Alan Jackson to make the best they could of the sides they were given, to see the Club through this difficult period. Even so, in 1985 five 2nd XI matches had to be cried off and the poor weather that season probably kept that total as low as it was and some Sundays saw only one fixture being arranged. Fifty-eight players represented the 2nd XI that season with only three playing in over half of the matches. The theme for the season was set in the 2nd XI's first league match of the season when in spite of a best ever 96 from Jim Wallace and a decent total against Bessborough, newly in the league, a nine wicket defeat to the eventual division winners, and the 2nd XI finished bottom. The season also ended sadly with the death of Gordon Wilson.

League matches had switched to Saturday only in 1986 and had expanded to three divisions the previous season. The 1st XI finished bottom of Division 2 and so both teams were relegated to Division 3 of the Hertfordshire Cricket Competition. It was still difficult to turn out sides, even with reducing Sunday fixtures, and that season sixty-five different players turned out for the 2nd XI. During the year a decision was taken to resign from the league, though this was later reversed. Fortunes reached rock bottom in 1987 when the 1st XI finished bottom of Division 3.

But 1987 did see the start of some improvements in the fortunes of OF cricket. Under the new leadership of David Trott the 2nd XI achieved mid table respectability, even beating eventual league winners Old Camdenians, with Alan Jackson taking 7 for 39, later eclipsed by 8 for 40 for Roger Bone against Southgate Adelaide. Jackson also recorded an unbelievable 94 against De Havilland in 205 for 3, whereupon it rained. 1988 saw the 1st XI missing promotion by one point but receiving two awards from the league sponsors for team of the month. The 2nd XI won their division's award for the season's fastest scoring rate, the first trophy won by the cricket section for fifteen years, other than wooden spoons!

The season saw a record 2nd XI partnership of 189 by

Pankaj Karnarni (99 – run out) and Anil Varma (86*) against Old Owens, Ian Morris recording the first 2nd XI century for eleven years against Datchworth, swiftly followed by another, with Brian Page scoring 102* against Preston.

Not to be left out, new captain of the 1st XI, Howard Masters, scored 101* against Sandridge and finished the 1989 league season averaging 52.07. Andrew Bonafont also featured with runs and wickets, with 93* against Preston, when OFs were struggling at 62 for 6, and finished with a seven wicket haul against Hertfordians, as did Cliff Holland against Old Haberdashers. This season was the first when only one Sunday XI was fielded throughout the season but even so, with less fixtures, there were some good individual performances. The winner of the John Codd runs trophy was Hitesh Sood with 1,006 runs in the season and Andrew Bonafont took the Alan Duke wickets trophy with 85, just seeing off Alan Jackson with 83 wickets. For the 2nd XI Pankaj Karnani scored 111* against Old Haberdashers and the side retained its fastest scoring rate trophy and achieved second place in the league, recording eleven wins in fifteen matches.

Old Haberdashers seemed to be OF's "rabbits" at the time as the following season the 2nd XI posted a record 284 for 5 against them, to win by a margin of 200 runs, also a record. Ishaq Fatani scored 124* in the friendly match against Old Fullerians the same season and Andrew Bonafont retained the Alan Duke trophy with an even better haul of 91 wickets for the season (av. 10.65).

Anil Varma was now captain of the 2nd XI and in 1991 led the side to the Division 3 championship. Leon Winter dominated the batting with 621 league runs (aggregating over 1,200 runs in total for the Club in the season) and the main wicket takers were Roger Bone, Ajay Mehta and Alan Jackson, totalling 112 league wickets between them. Unfortunately no promotion for the 2nd XI being tied to the performance of the 1st XI.

OF Cricket 2nd XI, Division 3 Champions – 1991
Left to right, *Back Row:*- J.Wallace, A.Jackson, A.Mehta, M.Smith, F.Sawyer, R.Bone, *Front Row:*- G.Owen, P.Bounsall, L.Winter, A.K.Varma(Capt.) A.Dudman, P.Philbey.

OF Cricket 1st XI, Division 3 Champions – 1992
Left to right, *Back Row:*- W.Jolley, J.Pandya, M.Hall, I.Fatani, V.Mehta, *Middle Row:*- A.Dudman, A.Mehta, R.Raval, B.Rice, M.Rawal, P.Sogbodhor, *Front Row:*- I.Sutherland (Umpire), A.Bonafont, H.Masters, G.Rice, A.Sherman, D.Dickinson (Scorer).

But the following season saw the 1st XI as Division 3 champions and so promotion for both sides to Division 2. Howard Masters again led the side, after stepping down for one season, and with a mixture of youth and experience and a core of fifteen regular players they won their first six matches and never looked back. Vinay Mehta was player of the year, with 104 against Southgate Compton and 8 for 18 against Elstree, the highlights of his season in which he made 511 runs (av. 46.45) and took 31 wickets, in league matches.

Success breeds success and so the 1st XI continued on their winning ways in 1993 and were runners up in their first season back in Division 2, and so again promotion for both sides, to Division 1. The 2nd XI also finished in a creditable third place. Vinay Mehta was again the mainstay of the side and won the league award for player of the year for Division 2. Young guns Alan Dudman and Peter Sogbodjor also came to the fore, with run aggregates for the year in all matches of 1,280 and 1,076 respectively. The only sad note for the season was the death of Alan Duke in September.

The 1994 season was one of consolidation with both teams in Division 1 of the newly extended Hertfordshire Cricket League which saw the breakaway of top Hertfordshire sides in 1974 back as a premier division of the merged league set up. It has to be recorded for posterity that the Newsletter Report that year mentioned "three stunning close catches taken by Andrew Sherman" in the match against Broxbourne.

Old Millhillians 2nd XI were Division 1 champions in 1994 but being tied to their first team could not be promoted. On 13th May 1995 OFs 2nd XI visited the reigning league champions who were still on a high and full of expectancy and OFs were bowled out for a meagre 100, only reaching that score with seven runs from Roger Bone

at No. 11. A hostile spell of bowling by Sherry Jahangir (5 for 29) saw the home side dismissed for 98 and a shock defeat from which their season never recovered. The game is also memorable as Roger Bone's last competitive OFs cricket match before giving in to injury, at least with the satisfaction of a victory and an important contribution, as he did for OF cricket over several years, including some of the most difficult ones. Alan Jackson produced some remarkable figures that year with an analysis of 25 14 24 4 against Knebworth Park.

The 1995 season also saw the reintroduction of the summer cricket tour after a two year break with the first venture to the Isle of Wight. OF cricket tours go back to the pre and post war trips to Broadstairs, Kent, which finally stopped in 1961. A Norfolk tour was first arranged in 1987 and it proved to be a successful venue, continuing to 1992. Tours then to the Isle of Wight until 2001, interspersed with one to Devon, and a final one to Kent in 2002.

There have been many tour highlights over the years but the 1988 match at Fakenham produced one of the most memorable. Jim Wallace pursuing the ball to the boundary with his usual vigour could not stop and disappeared headlong into the surrounding undergrowth much to the mirth of the rest of the team. Only afterwards did we discover that it was full of scrap metal but fortunately no injury sustained.

The game at picturesque Holkham Hall in 1989 saw the rare event of two centuries by OF players in the same match with Guy Rice (117) and Hitesh Sood (101*) enjoying the run feast. The highest individual score by an OF batsman was recorded on tour at Ventnor in 1996, with Peter Sogbodjor scoring 162 runs in a total of 418 for 9, and this in a 45 over match that also saw a record margin of victory, by 228 runs. The 2002 tour to Kent included a fixture on the county ground at Folkestone and a memorable innings of 150* by Trevor Lee at Hawkinge.

The 1996 season saw the Hertfordshire League introduce a floating league structure with all elevens able to be promoted/relegated independently and so OFs 2nd XI no longer being tied to the performances of the 1st XI. This was put to immediate use by OFs with the 1st XI relegated to Division 2 after finishing bottom and the cries of "bat first" from Geoff Owen can still be heard echoing around Southover. The season was not without some fine individual performances, notably with the return to the country for one year of Raj Tara who recorded 120* against Old Camdenians and 98* against Wormley. He was also able to present his "Memorial Trophy" (broken bat caused by him stamping on it during a match in 1984!) in person for the first time for the most ducks in the season at the annual dinner. The 2nd XI highlight of the season was a swashbuckling 83* by Frank Sawyer at Hatfield to steer the side to a victorious run chase as part of 229 for 8, but at the other end of the scale was a match saving 22* scored in 48 overs by Jonathan Rowley at Chorleywood.

Such a dearth of runs was eclipsed in a friendly match at Southover the following year. Opener N. Best of Harpenden scoring 5* off 54 overs in a total of 87 for 7. Yawn! Under new captain Vinay Mehta the 1st XI immediately claimed back their place in Division 1 achieving third place in 1997 and 40 wickets (av. 12.4) by Paresh Somani was a big factor in the success of the team. For the 2nd XI Andrew Sherman embarked on two prolific years with the bat winning, and then retaining, the league award for the leading batsmen of the division and he featured in a record beating 196 run partnership with Trevor Lee against UCA in 1998. That season also saw Dan Merryweather become a batting force, recording three centuries in friendly matches.

The yo-yo existence of the 1st XI continued, finishing bottom of Division 1 in 1999 but due to the restructuring of the league, with all elevens fitting into a vertical structure, were not relegated as such and moved into Division 3 of the league for 2000, with the 2nd XI in Division 6, of a total of 13 divisions and a premier league. There were certainly teething problems with the new set up and the 2000 season started with the 1st XI having eight home league fixtures. This of course meant that the 2nd XI had eight away league fixtures, their first match at Southover being on 1st July! As the 2nd XI had not won an away match since July 1998 this made for a hard season and meant they had to win their last two matches to avoid relegation, which they did.

The fixture list problem was much improved in 2001 but the 2nd XI still had to avoid the drop by pulling off some important end of season results. The season had started badly with Rhymal Persad, in his second year as 2nd XI captain, breaking his leg in the last football match of the season and his brother, Rishi Persad (soon to be part of the BBC TV horse racing presentation team), stepping into the breach.

2001 saw the death of Peter Frazer who dominated OF cricket post-war for thirty years. He was also responsible for producing a history of OF cricket from 1946 to 1973 and much of his work has proved of great value in compiling this report. It is a pity that 1st XI records since have been neglected.

The first years of the new millennium saw the continued rise of Paresh Somani as a bowling force in Division 3 of the Hertfordshire League, taking 50, 48 and 54 league wickets in successive years from 2000 to 2002. But one of the finest matches seen at Southover in this period was the 2001 Becker Transport knock-out cup second round match against Hatfield who posted a massive 335 for 2 off their allotted 50 overs. OF's reply was a spirited 326 for 9.

The 2002 season must go down in OF's cricket history as one of the most remarkable, almost rivalling 1973. For both 1st XI and 2nd XI to achieve independent promotion in the same season was a tremendous feat, but as usual for the OFs it was not without heart stopping moments. With the

ever optimistic Chris Pope in his third season as captain relegation seemed as likely as promotion in mid season. "Spin twins" Paresh Somani and Alan Dudman then produced their magic which was to see them claim 97 league wickets between them in the season. The 2nd XI clinched promotion in their penultimate match of the season and could have finished second with a win in their final match. But the 1st XI needed to win their final game of the season, at Southover against Letchworth, but disaster, seven regulars were missing, mostly due to Ishaq Fatani's wedding! Rhymal Persad stepped up to captain the first team taking many of the 2nd XI with him, and guided the side to a remarkable victory by one wicket. The 1st XI finished third and the 2nd XI finished fourth, having been thrashed by Chipperfield with their makeshift side, both being promoted.

With Chris Pope off to Australia and so missing for 2003, along with several other first team members, it was always going to be a difficult season. Rhymal Persad, with a taste for first team action, had agreed to step in to the 1st XI captaincy but further disaster struck pre-season with a recurrence of his leg problem. The season was a struggle throughout with several different captains and by the time the skipper was fit and able to play again the 1st XI were in the position of requiring two victories to have any chance of avoiding relegation. These were both won and safety from relegation achieved until the League fined the side 30 points for a minor technical infringement that occurred in May. The outcome of the lodged appeal is still awaited and the handling of the situation, and now the delay, does not reflect well on the League.

The on the field excitement of the season was the race for the John Codd league runs aggregate trophy. Dan Merryweather, the 2nd XI captain, was consistent all season and Darren Crispin, playing for both teams at different times during the season, put himself in the frame with consecutive innings of 89 not out. But the winner, also playing for both teams, was Darshan Depala, still at CCF, who finally claimed the trophy in the last match, rewarding his fine technique and level-headedness for one so young.

It has been a feature of the OF cricket section over the past ten years or so to improve the facilities available at Southover. The wooden sight screens that arose from the Diamond Jubilee have been refurbished and also rebuilt, and two plastic screens were acquired in 1996, all four now being in use. The practice net and wicket have been in existence for over ten years and covers were instigated and paid for in 1993 by Howard Masters in his presidential year, though they have since been replaced. A bowling machine was purchased in 1997 and the latest addition is a portable net that can be wheeled to any position. This was at the instigation of Chris Pope, partly funded by his corporate matches being played at Southover plus other donations and cricket section funds. All this when less games are being played and paying members of the section are at their lowest, it is a credit to the committee members over the years in what has been achieved.

Hopefully still in Division 2 and under the injury free captaincy of Rhymal Persad he can lead the Club into the next century for OF cricket. Besides those mentioned in this report, there are numerous other players, umpires and scorers, teas' providers, ground workers and committee members who over the years have made the cricket section what it is today and contributed to its history, all vital in their own way. It is now down to the up and coming younger element to complement the established performers and take the cricket section forward.

A.K.J.

CHAPTER 8:

GOLF

EARLY YEARS……

Old Finchleian golf started off, so to speak, with a good drive in 1919, most of the 20 who enrolled being already members of the North Middlesex Golf Club, on whose hospitable course many of the early matches, and a fair number of later ones were played. The original Honorary Secretary, T.D. Sykes, organised and carried through during that season the first competition, a knock-out one for a trophy presented by Mr. and Mrs. R. W. Vick. In the final A. R. Bothwell just beat L.T. Brook on the last green by laying a stymie, a diabolical device not now permitted by the amended rules of the Royal and Ancient game. A stroke competition was soon added to the Vick cup matches, Mr John Kynoch having donated the Bruce cup in memory of his son, Alexander Bruce Kynoch (CCF 1906-10), a victim of the First World War.

In 1928 the official name of "Old Finchleians' Golf Society" was adopted, "it being understood that in all possible ways the Society shall acknowledge and always keep prominent the fact that it is a section of the Finchleian Club." Matches were played with varying success against Hendon Golf Club, North Middlesex GC, Old Cholmelians and Old Millhillians.

In 1934 there were sufficient members of the OFGS to initiate an annual match between Old Finchleians belonging to North Middlesex and those belonging to Finchley GC. The Coronation Cup was presented by H.A. Neale and N. H. Richardson in 1937 to mark their year as Captain of the Society and President of the Old Finchleians respectively.

On the eve of the Second World War, the society was thriving, with a long fixture list and plans for a new innovation – a golfing weekend in the Autumn. Alas when that time came, many of the players were engaged in sterner battles.

AFTER THE WAR……

A new trophy in memory of Bob Stewart was presented in 1951 for competition between OFGS and Finchley Golf Club, to both of which this gallant Old Finchleian had belonged. Also in 1951 the Spring meeting was resumed at Dunstable Downs. The Autumn weekend meeting first suggested before the war got off the ground in 1948. Liphook in Surrey was the usual venue for the early matches staying at the Royal Anchor, with a one off switch to Huntercombe in 1950, residing at the Catherine Wheel Hotel at Henley-on-Thames

A new venue was tried in 1953, which would be the 'home' of the Autumn meeting for the next 13 years. The delightful course at Goring & Streatley was supplemented by very comfortable quarters at the "The Miller of Mansfield."

The mid fifties saw a core membership of the Society of around 25 members. The regular golfers were: Harry Amory, Bertie Bothwell, Sid Follis, Frank Kittel, Reg Mander, Nibby Newell, Eddie Talbot, Ken Wylie, Jumbo Asquith, Rupert

OF Golfers 1951

Left to right, F.G.Newell, B.L.Asquith, A.R.Bothwell, C.Robinson, P.N.Knight, P.Moody, G.A.Lambert, C.E.Jackson, a friend, H.A.Neale, N.H.Richardson, T.M.Turner.

Left to right, Bertie Bothwell, Tim Turner, N.H. (Dickie) Richardson.

Casson, Chick Fowell, Percy Knight, "Jock" Milne, Dickie Richardson, Alan Tickner, Ken Campbell, Bill Champion, Cyril Jackson, Graham Lambert, Percy Moody, Robbie Smart, and Tim Turner.

Matches were played regulary against Old Elysians and Old Haberdashers. In March 1956 Sid Follis resigned as one of the joint secretaries and was replaced by Graham Lambert who joined Cyril Jackson. Frank Kittel took over from Cyril soon after and 1956 also saw Geoff Davidson and Tony Beard join the Society.

The Golf report in the Newsletter of April 1960 included "an appeal for younger members to take the place of the gradually diminishing old hands", and in the next few years the average age of the membership was considerably lowered when Jimmy Walter and the Three Lambert brothers Garry, Nigel and Rod joined the Society.

The petrol shortage in 1957 necessitated a temporary change in the venue for the Spring meeting from Dunstable (first played in 1924) to Grims' Dyke in Middlesex.

1962 saw the 10th year of the Autumn meeting at Goring and Streatley and members joining the society during the 1960s and early 1970s included; Alec and George Buist, Peter Hutchens, Charles Smith, John Friend, David Sparrow, Peter Turner, Nicky Nye, Gerry Fitch, Ray Young, David Pollard, Cyril Wearing, Frank Follis, Keith Eldred, Norman Harrison, Peter Chisholm, Jack Baxter, David Fereday, Fred Honey, Peter Vermeulen, Albert Mitchell and Brian Walder. In 1966 the two day Autumn meeting switched to John o' Gaunt at Biggleswade after a general consensus among OF golfers, that the first few holes at Goring and Streatley were a little too hilly and tiring for an ageing membership.

The 5oth anniversary of the society in 1969 saw the introduction of a golf dinner at Southover and 58 members and their ladies attended. The membership in 1939 was recorded as 49 but by 1973, despite the ever growing popularity of the game the society numbers had dropped to 30. In fact records show that only 18 members played at Dunstable Downs in the Spring of 1973 and the following year saw the 55th year of OFs Golf at this superb Bedfordshire course.

After several successful years at John o'Gaunt, in 1975 the two-day Autumn outing was switched to Thetford in Norfolk under the auspices of Keith Eldred who was to organise many most enjoyable meetings in this lovely part of the world.

In 1977 Graham Lambert who had been a stalwart of the society since the 1930s and joint secretary since 1956 passed away and Cyril Wearing agreed to take over his secretarial role and others doing secretarial duties into the 80s were David Pollard and Jack Baxter.

Dunstable in April 1980 was noteworthy not just for the arctic weather conditions, but for the now infamous occasion of Jock Milne's "lost car keys" when Jock and some of the more hardy OFs were seen tramping the fairways in the snow at the end of 36 holes of golf to try to find Jock's keys when all the time they were in the boot lock of his car!

The Newsletter for the winter of 1982/3 recorded that there were 16 members at Thetford in September 1982 for the Autumn meeting and there was a very welcome visit from the "Old Guard" in the shape of Jock Milne, Frank Kittel, Ken Wylie, Harry Amory and Norman Harrison.

By the middle 1980s the original society was struggling very badly to muster sufficient numbers to keep the meetings going and in fact 1986 saw the last visit to Dunstable Downs and the very enjoyable meeting at Thetford had to be suspended as several holes were being lost to the new Thetford by-pass.

SOCIETIES UNITE ……

Mention was made in the newsletter as early as 1985 of the existence of the "OF's Alternative Golfing Society" or "OFAGS" which was made up of current or retired OF footballers. It wasn't, unfortunately, until September 1990 that a meeting was arranged for members of the two societies to play at Thetford where 14 OFs attended and a formal amalgamation of the two societies was proposed and agreed with acclamation. The members of the original society still playing at this time were: Peter Vermeulen, David Pollard, Peter Hutchens, Don Merritt, Jack Baxter, Keith Eldred, Peter Chisholm, G.M. Whaite, David Fereday, Nigel Lambert, Norman Harrison, and non-playing; Frank Kittel and Jock Milne.

The now disbanded "OFAGS" provided an array of talent, some of it even for golf. Among the new members, and in no particular order were: Roger Bone, Ian Bone, Alan Nicholls, Geoff Coley, Lee Cousins, Kevin Binns, Stewart Mackenzie, John Wilkes, Martin Priestley, Chris andTony Hannington, Alan Lewis, John, Derek, Paul and Richard Dutton, Harvey Peters, Derek Palmer, John Wilks, Bruce Mercer, Pat Finn, Steve Holyland, Chas Willett, Andy Dyer, Roger Mace, Steve Astley, Frank Sawyer, Pat Kinsella, Peter Ellis, Alan Dyson, Howard Masters, Tony Davis, Derek Hill, Bob Sherman, Harj Sandhu, David Kyte, John Lovett, Paul Carroll, Geoff Levy, Bob Cinnamon and Geoff Gascoine.

Roger Bone agreed to be secretary of the newly merged society and had much to do with its successful revival. In April 1991 at Brookmans Park Keith Eldred was elected Captain with John Wilks as his Vice Captain.

The OFGS has gone from to strength to strength

OFGS 2004

following the merger and in 1993 the society resumed play at its home course at Finchley and in 1994 there were 26 members attending at both Bridgedown GC and Finchley. For the rest of the 90s the society was playing four meetings a year and since Ian Bone took over as secretary from Roger in 2000 this number has been nudged up to five.

The original trophies – Southover Cup, Vick Cup, Coronation Cup, Bruce Cup, and Stewart Cup, have been supplemented by – the Graham Lambert Cup, President's Cup, Captain's Cup, Nigel Lambert Goblets, Smugglers Cup and Bone Better Ball Trophy which means that there is a trophy for morning and afternoon at each meeting.

The society always welcomes new members and we play at some lovely courses. In 2003 the venues were Hendon, Brookmans Park, Old Ford Manor, West Herts, and Finchley.

We look forward to our own centenary in 2019 in great heart.

N. L.

CHAPTER 9:

CRA

CENTARIAN REGIMENTAL ASSOCIATION (CRA)
The Association of ex-Cadets of Christ's College CCF

In November 1957, following a year or two during which the idea of a Regimental Association had increasingly been discussed, a group of eleven like-minded ex-cadets met to form the CRA. This meeting took place during the 100th year of existence of Christ's College and hence the name 'Centarian' was adopted.

The desire reflected a major change in the Contingent. Until 1950, all the Officers of the Corps had been schoolmasters but with the appointment of 'Tod' Jennings (1937-41), as the Adjutant, who had recently returned from war service with the Airborne Forces, a new era opened. Soon another ex-cadet, Justin Hereford (1941-48) joined as the Training Officer. It became quite normal for ex-cadets to continue to serve in a variety of capacities. In the early days, many had National Service experience, such as Jimmy Stout (Royal Military Police), Arthur Banham (Middlesex Regiment), Bob Doughty (Royal Army Pay Corps), Billy Hintze (Royal Engineers), Brian Wisbey (REME) Mick Taylor (RASC) to name but a few.

The spirit within the Corps and amongst ex-cadets was such that the CRA was a logical step to provide a formal organisation for mutual contact and to support the activities of the Cadet Corps at the school. Membership quickly rose to over 100 and has more or less maintained that level ever since and its aim today continues to reflect that spirit.

Among the founder members were Captain 'Tod' Jennings MM and Under Officer Peter Green who both went on to become Lieutenant Colonels and Commanding Officers of Christ's College and Royal Russell CCF respectively. They were also the Chairman and Secretary respectively of the CRA and served as such for the first five years.

In 1959, following protracted negotiations with the Club and the Headmaster, the CRA became a full section of the Old Finchleians and the first edition of "Ricochet", the CRA journal, appeared. It contains news of its members, reports of the activities of both the CRA and the Corps. Over the years it has had a number of editors, the most recent being Darren Crispin (1983-90). One of its earlier editors was Brian Fuller who later went on to be Association Secretary, occupying the post for 20 years until 1987.

In 1960 Lt Col 'Harry' Turl was installed as the first President and Ken James (the new) Headmaster was welcomed as a Vice-President and joined fellow vice-presidents Brigadier Brian Kennett, 'Peggy' Pegrum, Major Don Watterson, Lt Col F R Wright and Denis Thatcher (husband of the very new local MP!).

Also in 1960 the Association's tie was adopted with its thin silver, maroon and yellow stripes on a dark blue background reflecting the dual affiliations with the School and the Middlesex Regiment and in 1961 the Association's crest and motto.

The first Annual Dinner of the Association took place at the Comedy Restaurant in 1959 when some 35 members and guests attended. Diners have met every year since in various local hostelries although gravitating to Southover in 1969 where they have met ever since, their numbers remaining fairly steadily between 25 and 30. Different members turn up on every occasion lending a particular interest to the function! For 25 years David Groom (1951-58) organised the Dinners, a responsibility handed over in 2000 to Terry Gibson (1972-78).

In May 1963 two Centarians were actively involved in the OF sub-committee which was set up to design and build the new Memorial Clubhouse at Southover.

Since its formation several eminent Centarians have

"The Corps of Drums - 'Sunset' at Southover"

been honoured by invitations to become President of the parent OF Club: Tod Jennings 1968/69, Eric Dominy 1974/75, Brian Fuller 1990/91 and Peter Green 1998/99.

Two 'Searchlight Tattoos' took place on the field at Southover in 1968 and 1971. These featured cadets from Christ's College but also Royal Russell CCF and 23 Cadet Squadron, Royal Engineers ACF both commanded by Centarians; Peter Green and Ray Waller. These events brought together many OFs, Centarians, cadets and their families who enjoyed being involved in, or watching, displays of continuity drill, judo, campcraft, signalling and tactics as well as a cavalcade of "cadets through the ages", culminating, at sunset, with "Beating Retreat" by the Corps of Drums and their fanfare trumpeters (above).

Distinguished guests celebrate the CRA's 21st Birthday at Southover

1978 saw the 21st Birthday of the CRA (below) and it was celebrated at Southover with a party which many eminent ex-cadets attended including Brian Kennett (CSM 1909-16) Norman Motson (Drum Major 1916-23), Rudolph Risius (RSM 1927-31), Lionel Frerk (Sgt 1939-45) with over 90 former and present cadets and their families.

In the following year, to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the formation of the Cadet Corps in 1904, the CRA produced a unique Commemorative Postal Cover with the help of the British Forces Postal Service at Inglis Barracks, Mill Hill and the OF Club who provided financial backing.

The arrival at Hendon Lane, of the Commemorative Covers from Bisley

On 30th September 1979 two thousand Covers were marched in relay by teams of cadets the

61 miles from Bisley in Surrey, where the early annual camps of the Rifle Club took place, to the School. The final leg was accompanied through Finchley by the Corps of Drums. 200 of the covers were of a limited issue signed by Sir James Paterson Ross KCVO (1906-12) and Brigadier Brian Kennett CBE who had both been members of the Rifle Club before the Corps was finally established. (Some of these covers still remain for purchase).

Sadly, in 1982, Tony Stockdale (1955-61) who had been a prominent committee member, editor of Ricochet and Vice-Chairman of the Association, suddenly died at the tragically early age of 38. He had been an adult Warrant Officer Instructor and a passionate supporter of the Corps and keenly interested in its history. He had been the instigator and driving force behind the Commemorative Cover project. He had, over the years, collected many photographs and artefact of the Corps and in 1983, as a tribute to him, his friends formed the "Stockdale Trust" (to be a History of the Cadet Corps at Christ's College, Finchley) to preserve and extend the work that he had started. The Trust has, since then on many occasions, mounted displays of the Corps' history notably at the annual Remembrance Day Parades at the School and at the Biennial Inspections by the Ministry of Defence.

The CRA maintains strong links with the school through the Cadet Corps as all its current serving Officers and Senior NCOs are also Centarians, several of them being committee members notably WO2 Mike Crick, Capt Ray Waller, respectively Chairman and Secretary since 1993 and Capt Brian Fuller who has held various positions on the committee during a continuous period of service of over 40 years.

When the school made its final move from Hendon Lane to its present site at East End Road, the two school war memorials which had been located in the gymnasium and school hall were re-located in the new drama hall and were brought together for the first time. This piece of school history was largely due to the efforts of the Headmaster, Brian Fletcher. Since then the Corps has

"50 Years On" – 11 'vets' with some of the current Unit staff and senior cadets

Headmaster and Cadet Staff at a Regimental Dinner

marked Remembrance Sunday with a formal parade under the memorials, which is then followed by the annual presentation of cadet awards. This moving ceremony, which links present and past pupils, is also attended by the OF President and members of the CRA.

All the current staff of the Corps are ex-cadets, a situation which has prevailed since Dez Tinch (our last school-based officer) left us and makes Christ's College CCF almost unique. It is also only one of two known schools to have its own Colours; the Regimental Colour having been paid for by donations from Old Finchleians and the Queen's Colour by parents and friends of the Unit.

These colours were presented at Inglis Barracks in 1952 and in 2002, at Southover, a reunion was held (below) to which all former cadets were invited. Eleven of those who had been on the original parade spent a most enjoyable afternoon renewing acquaintances and chatting to some current, much younger members of the Corps who had turned up to meet some of their predecessors.

Of the current staff, the Commanding Officer, Lt Col Jon Walden (CCF 1964-71) and Capt Brian Fuller (1951-57) who has only missed one Annual Camp (when he was at the Olympic Games in 1996) since joining the Corps in 1951 and who celebrated 50 years unbroken service in 2002, have both received the second bar to their Cadet Forces Medal. Five others have also received their CFM; WO2 Mike Crick (1960-66), Capt Ray Waller (1962-69), Capt John Cliff (1967-75), WO2 John Bowra (1972-77) and Capt Gary Davies (1974-79). Other Centarians who have previously been awarded the CFM are Peter Green (1946-54), Jimmy Stout (1947-52), Arthur Banham (1948-53) and Colin Chandler (1952-57).

In addition to the 'regulars' mentioned above, Centarians (and their wives) customarily turn out to voluntarily assist the Corps at their various parades, camps and functions supporting the Unit in a variety of ways. In 2004 the Cadet Force at Christ's College will have been in existence for 100 years and in 2007 the CRA will celebrate the 50th anniversary of its formation. We anticipate being

able to report on many more activities in the future!
The Association continues to flourish, acknowledging and living up to its motto: "Serviendo Coniuncti" – United by Service.

	Presidents		**Chairmen**
1960	H. W. Turl	1957	E. P. Jennings
1966	H. B. Pegrum	1963	P. W. Green
1970	E. P. Jennings	1968	R. Hedgecoe
1972	H. B. Pegrum	1969	D. J. Floyd
1984	K. W. James	1970	P. W. Green
1990	E. N. Dominy	1993	M. J. Crick
1993	P. W. Green		

B.W.F.

CHAPTER 10:

LODGE

OLD FINCHLEIANS' LODGE NO. 5409

Many schools of the standing of CCF have an Old Boys Lodge carrying the name of the Old Boys Club or Association. Much discussion took place before the decision was taken that the Lodge should be founded. One of the main problems was that the Lodge would bear the name of the Old Boys Club but would owe its allegiance to an outside body, The United Grand Lodge of England. The founding of a Lodge is not a matter to be taken lightly, for by its very nature the Lodge is intended to outlast all those who were party to its birth and indeed many generations thereafter.

The rules which govern Football and Cricket are reasonably well known, even if not in detail, but those governing Freemasonary are a closed book to most people, so it is perhaps worth considering what Freemasonary and such a Lodge stands for.

Freemasonary is not a religious body and is open to all men of good standing, irrespective of their colour, creed or religion. The first and most essential qualification for membership is a belief in a Supreme Being, known by whatever name the members' or candidates' religion dictates. The names used for the Supreme Being in Masonic Meetings enable men of all religions to join together in prayer without causing offence to each other by using religious specific titles.

Freemasonary requires its members to obey the laws of any country in which they live and to encourage others to do the same. It does not offer opinions as to the rights and wrongs of State policy either at home or abroad. One of its principal objects is the dispensing of charity, which in Masonic parlance, covers not only financial charity, but charity of mind to ALL mankind. Any financial aid distributed , whether in cash or kind, is raised entirely from within the membership, although substantial donations are made to other than masonic charities. Freemasons are forbidden, at pain of exclusion, from using their membership for personal gain.

Having considered all the relevant information, the Old Finchleians Club gave its consent to the formation of the Lodge and the appropriate paperwork was instituted. The warrant of the Lodge was granted by the United Grand Lodge of England and the Lodge was consecrated at Freemasons Hall on 20th October 1033, with T.S.M. Follis, L.A. Goss and F.A. Brooks as the principal officers. The Lodge originally met at King Edward Hall, Finchley, afterwards moving to Gatti's restaurant in the Strand, and then to the Piccadilly Hotel. It then moved to the Great Eastern, to the Royal Commonwealth Society, to Shuttleworths Restaurant and then to its present meeting place, 10 Duke Street, St James's.

At the time of its founding, membership of the Lodge was restricted to Old Boys and Masters of CCF. Initially the number of Candidates emanating from this source enabled the Lodge to grow at a very satisfactory rate, and despite the restrictions imposed by the war years, it grew from an original Eleven founders, to become the second largest "section" of the club. Unfortunately this progress was not maintained and in 1970 with numbers beginning to fall, it was decided that membership of the Lodge should be opened to all men of good standing. The Lodge celebrated its Platinum Jubilee in 1993. It continues to thrive and looks forward to a long and happy future. If you are not already a member and wish to become one then please make enquiries. The Secretary of The Old Finchleians Club has the name and telephone number of the current Lodge Secretary. We will be very pleased to see you.

A full list of the Masters of Old Finchleians Lodge since its foundation appears overleaf.

MASTERS

1933 - 34	T.S.M. Follis
1934 - 35	L.A. Goss
1935 - 36	F.A. Brooks
1936 - 37	J.E. Talbot
1937 - 38	C.A. Hosking
1938 - 41	B. Dumville
1941 - 43	A.R. Pilgrim
1943 - 45	T.S.M Follis
1945 - 46	L.A. Goss
1946 - 47	J.E. Talbot
1947 - 48	H.R. Rainbird
1948 - 49	M.R. Dumville
1949 - 50	H.B.S. Herbert
1950 - 51	E.R. Harveyson
1951 - 52	C.T. Parsons
1952 - 53	E.J.C Lines
1953 - 54	F.A Brooks
1954 - 55	J.W Pike
1955 - 56	D.J. Sparrow
1956 - 57	H.J. Friend
1957 - 58	R.M. Leslie
1958 - 59	R Dessar
1959 - 60	J.S Follis
1960 - 61	H.S Wolff
1961 - 62	W.G Goldsmith
1962 - 63	R.O Goss
1963 - 64	K. Wylie
1964 - 65	J.S Knight
1965 - 66	F.S. Follis
1966 - 67	C.C Lorenzen
1967 - 68	E.E. Sims
1968 - 69	J.A.F. Martin
1969 - 70	P. Allen
1971 - 72	P.J.C. Brooks
1972 - 73	M.L. Morris
1973 - 74	A.W. Clark
1974 - 75	R.Hedgecoe
1975 - 76	B.E. Wisbey
1976 - 77	K.L. Compton
1977 - 78	H.J. Friend
1978 - 79	L.H. Brittain
1979 - 80	J. S. Follis
1980 - 81	M.G. Chandler
1981 - 82	R.F. Wilson
1982 - 83	P.W. Moody
1983 - 84	J. Andrews
1984 - 85	A.R.Kimpton
1985 - 86	W.S. Goldsmith
1986 - 87	W.W. Gibson
1987 - 88	P.J. Hatton
1988 - 89	F.J. Bertelson
1989 - 90	B.R. Jeans
1990 - 91	D.L. Brittain
1991 - 92	A. Trueman
1992 - 93	A.C Hillier
1993 - 94	A.J. Rolfe
1994 - 95	D. Baldree
1995 - 96	J. Onofrio
1996 - 97	R.A. Juniper
1997 - 98	J.C. Mead
1998 - 99	B.E. Wisbey
1999 - 2000	H.J. Israel
2000 - 01	A.D. Garner
2001 - 03	D.J. Wisbey
2003 - 04	R. Hedgecoe

B.E.W.

CHAPTER 11:

DRAMATIC SOCIETY

In the days when Golders Green was a country crossroads hemmed in by tall hedges and not a house in sight, and indeed when Finchley Church End was separated from North Finchley and East Finchley by acres of fields, the OFDS was born. The year was 1912. The idea that dramatics could be an integral part of OF activities came from Rupert Casson and B.L.Asquith, and their first modest production was a one-act play called *Fabricato* which was staged in the Big Schoolroom at Christ's College.

Three full-length plays were produced until in 1914 the First World War left everybody far too preoccupied to concentrate on amateur dramatics. A re-start was made in 1920 but the Big Schoolroom was far too cramped to be the ideal venue and in 1921 a move was made to the King Edward Hall in Hendon Lane where the Society enhanced its reputation with some first-class shows, notably *Grumpy* which was revived a few years later. Then came another move to Arcadia where the Society built its own stage in a way that would not have disgraced the professional theatre. Many fine plays were produced here including *Milestones*, *The Ringer*, *Murder on the Second Floor*, *The Trial of Mary Dugan* and *Journey's End*. The OFDS were the first amateur company to perform *Journey's End* and a professional critic at the Saturday performance wrote in glowing terms of the production.

In 1935 the proprietors of Arcadia found other uses for the hall and a return was made to Christ's College where this time the Second World War interrupted proceedings. After the war, very largely through the efforts of F.C.J.Parkes a new start was made at St. Luke's Hall in Mountfield Road and such shows as *While the Sun Shines*, *The Importance of Being Ernest* – the fiftieth show – *Night Must Fall*, *Seagulls over*

While the Sun Shines – 47th Production, March 1950
G.Buist, P.Frazer, C.R.Casson, P.King

The Importance of Being Ernest – 50th Production, November 1951
G.Buist, Anne Thomas, P.King

Simon and Laura – 61st Production, March 1957
Dilys McFarlane, P.Frazer, Pauline Frazer, M.Cromar

Sorrento, *Simon and Laura* and *Carrington, V.C*. were played to enthusiastic audiences.

The Dramatic Society had long cherished the dream that one day a stage and changing-rooms etc. could be built on to our new clubhouse at Southover but for financial reasons this was never to materialise. This fact, coupled with the relative accessibility of London theatres in comparison to the days when the Society was formed and that dreaded box in the living-room that discouraged people from turning out on a winter's night, all somehow contributed to the folding up of Old Finchleians dramatics.

It is interesting to see the list of the Society's Honorary Officers in 1962, the year of its Golden Jubilee.

Secretary	A.G.MacFarlane
Treasurer	E.C.Thrum
Box Office Managers	H.W.Baker
	R.N.Simmons
	A.W.Mackenzie
Stage Manager	H.G.Deaton
Asst. Stage Manager	A.Duke
Electrician	P.J.C.Brooks
Property Managers	L.F.Hodge
	D.F.Cope
Commitee	G.Buist
	F.J.M.Calder
	P.R.Frazer

It is significant that Rupert Casson who could have been no more than eighteen when he jointly formed the OFDS had a hand in almost all its productions from its inception to its demise.

Seagulls over Sorrento – 59th Production, March 1956
N.Leslie, F.Follis, F.Coldicott, P.Frazer, S.Simmonds

CHAPTER 12:

TABLE TENNIS AND OTHERS

Old Finchleian Sections remembered

Old Finchleians Football Club now 103 years old, the Cricket Club also celebrating its centenary this year, Golf 85 years old, the Lodge 71 years old and the CRA soon to celebrate its fiftieth anniversary – whilst their fortunes have fluctuated over time the Club Centenary sees them all in good health. Other sections have not been so lucky and are no longer with us, and this chapter briefly recalls them.

The Old Finchleians Table Tennis Club

The Table Tennis section started in 1934 in the then new building at the School and was unquestionably a success story from the beginning. It was formed by several enthusiasts, led by Gordon Wilson and Leslie Hodge and membership of the London League, in which some 25 clubs played was sought. In the early years progress was slow and the team was usually near the bottom of a low league. However many enjoyable matches were played and friendships made. Noted opponents at this time were the Dollis Hill Club and, in true Old Finchleian tradition, a local hostelry The Prince Albert.

After the war the section was granted use of a larger room at the School, and with the excellent pre-war table preserved intact and augmented by another, a gift from Rupert Casson, it was not long before the match conditions were the envy of every club we played. Teams were entered in the North Middlesex League and the Willesden League. Success – at first with mainly pre-war members – was immediate and startling. The first team gained three promotions in as many years in the North Middlesex League and became really well known in London Table Tennis circles, with a name especially as giant killers in the knockout cups. In 1953/54 this team gained promotion to the top division, in which many England and County players competed, and the Second team were able to win their division in 1952/53 to reach Division 2, an achievement of some note. Meanwhile in the Willesden League, the club reached the Premier Division in 1949/50 and although relegated the following year, they returned there in 1951/52 despite fielding below strength teams owing to the North Middlesex commitments. By 1954 the club had five teams playing regular League matches. The leading lights of the section in the fifties were Jack Baxter, John Draper, Don Fry, and Gordon Wilson, with special mention of Gordon and later Alan Duke for their secretarial duties.

The Table Tennis chapter in the Jubilee Book ended with 'May the fine traditions of the last twenty years be maintained!' Sadly the section was to go into decline and whereas at one time 150 to 200 spectators thronged the main hall, by the end of the fifties, Finals Night was relegated to Room 13. Scarcely any new blood was coming through the school to take over from the established players and Jeff Baines' efforts to reverse this trend met with only partial success and a Special Meeting decided there was no alternative but to close down the section.

With the arrival of the new clubhouse at Southover there was again an effort to resuscitate the section when ceiling lights were erected, but alas, Table Tennis went the way of the Dramatic Society and the final curtain fell.

The OF Lawn Tennis Club

Although CCF has produced more than its fair share of first class tennis players the game was only played for a few years at the school in the twenties, and most of our

stars learnt their strokes at local clubs like Finchley Manor LTC. In 1925 E.W. Moeran organised a Lawn Tennis Tournament among Old Finchleians and in the following year a lawn tennis section was started with "Uncle" Moeran as its Hon Secretary. For a few years members played an annual competition among themselves and an occasional game against the masters, but no matches with other clubs were undertaken. Before the decade was out, the section faded away, and the School was to lose its grass courts at the outbreak of the Second World War when they were requisitioned for allotments.

After the Second World War the section was revived. For two seasons just a club tournament was played and a solitary match in 1951 against the Ravens LTC which was won by five games to four. Encouraged by the interest aroused, a meeting was called on 23rd October 1951, and that evening the Old Finchleians' Lawn Tennis Club was born. The first official season was a most successful one, six matches being played against other clubs and five of them won. At the very first match against the Hale Club at Mill Hill, the section was assisted by "Bobby" Wilson, who had won Junior Wimbledon in 1950 and was already a Davis Cup player, although still at school. Peter Rance also played, and the result was a convincing win by 6 matches to 1.

Another Wimbledon player Hedley Baxter, (CCF 1933-37) lent his own court for the tournament finals, the singles being won by John Draper and the Doubles by Leslie Hodge and Alec Holden. In December 1952, S.M. Pugh took over the job of secretary from Pat Kennedy, who had worked hard to get the Club started and ably run the tournaments since 1950. John Draper (CCF 1941-48) also qualified for Wimbledon in 1955, while Jack Baxter has been winning titles throughout a long career which continues to the present day, competing in over-70s events around the world.

Leslie Hodge tried to keep the section going – there was talk at one stage of courts at Southover. However without our own courts we were reliant on the hospitality of other clubs and the section was to fold in 1960.

From Chess to Motor-cycles….

Others have lasted as long! Just before the outbreak of the First World War the Club was flourishing with nine sections. However many of these were not to survive that long after the hostilities, others flickered occasionally. The Jubilee Book records the names of Chess Club secretaries to 1925, with a revival after the Second World War from 1949-52, while the Swimming Club seems to have survived until the mid 1930s. We have earlier described some of the activities of the Debating Society, but they ran out of things to say in 1920, the same year as the Boxing Club failed to beat the count, which we trust is the only connection! The Fives Club did not survive the War, and although the Shooting Club did recommence its activities in 1919 it, perhaps not surprisingly, was only to last a couple of years. There was also a Motor-cycle Section formed in 1919 whose existence was very short.

PRESIDENTS

1904/06	H.Vyvyan Wells	1939/47	A.S.Bothwell	1975/76	A.T.Milne
1906/07	J.B.Goodyear	1947/48	M.Hunt	1976/77	J.H.Hutchinson
1907/08	I.H.Mosley	1948/49	F.W.B.Kittel	1977/78	D.B.Evans
1908/09	F.V.Robinson	1949/50	D.T.Turner	1978/79	T.Payne
1909/10	H.W.Harben	1950/51	G.W.Goss	1979/80	A.W.Clark
1910/11	A.R.Stephenson	1951/52	A.Barberi	1980/81	G.R.Owen
1911/12	F.H.Agar	1952/53	R.N.Simmons	1981/82	P.Allen
1912/13	J.M.Scott	1953/54	F.C.J.Parkes	1982/83	D.B.Pollard
1913/14	A.H.Forbes	1954/55	L.F.Hodge	1983/84	P.A.Molloy
1914/20	E.L.Burgin	1955/56	G.M.Wilson	1984/85	I.D.Sutherland
1920/21	L.A.Goss	1956/57	H.W.Baker	1985/86	A.Duke
1921/22	G.F.Carlton	1957/58	J.G.Bryson	1986/87	C.E.Taylor
1922/23	E.T.Moody	1958/59	C.E.Jackson	1987/88	P.W.Moody
1923/24	T.E.Ayshford	1959/60	A.H.Buist	1988/89	C.Hannington
1924/25	D.L.Medway	1960/61	F.A.Brooks	1989/90	M.D.H.Priestley
1925/26	W.E.Goodyear	1961/62	D.F.Cope	1990/91	B.W.Fuller
1926/27	A.G.Nelson	1962/63	H.B.Pegrum	1991/92	R.T.Bone
1927/28	A.R.Bothwell	1963/64	D.A.Wakefield	1992/93	A.C.Nicholls
1928/29	K.M.Boggon	1964/65	H.J.Friend	1993/94	H.B.Masters
1929/30	C.R.Casson	1965/66	G.B.Buist	1994/95	C.J.Holland
1930/31	B.L.Asquith	1966/67	G.S.W.Goodwin	1995/96	G.R.Niblett
1931/32	T.C.King	1967/68	J.S.Follis	1996/97	M.Riches
1932/33	P.Moody	1968/69	E.P.Jennings	1997/98	B.Fletcher
1933/34	J.E.Talbot	1969/70	H.F.Hintze	1998/99	P.W.Green
1934/35	L.T.Brook	1970/71	K.Wylie	1999/2000	N.S.Lambert
1935/36	L.R.Green	1971/72	N.H.Harrison	2000/01	D.B.Evans
1936/37	N.H.Richardson	1972/73	J.W.Pike	2001/02	M.P.F.Wiffen
1937/38	R.J.J.Mander	1973/74	G.L.Blacktop	2002/03	J.W.Wilkes
1938/39	T.S.M.Follis	1974/75	E.N.Dominy	2003/04	G.R.Owen

HON. SECRETARIES

1904/11	J. M. Scott
1911/12	F. Goodyear
1912 / 21	A. R. Bothwell
1921/22	E. G. Gardener
1922/28	H. N. Gibbs
1928/39	A. F. Coldicott
1939/51	R. J. J. Mander
1951/55	R. J. J. Mander and G. M. Wilson
1955/56	R. J. J. Mander
1956/62	G. M. Wilson and A. Duke
1962/84	A. Duke
1984 -	J. R. Bowra

HON. TREASURERS

1904/09	R. M. Lidstone
1909/14	I. H. Mosley
1914/21	H. W. Harben
1921/24	W. H. Wheeler
1924/25	H. W. Harben
1925/27	E. T. Moody
1927/29	J. E. Talbot
1929/35	J. E. Talbot and P. G. Osborne
1935/48	J. E. Talbot
1948/68	K. Wylie
1968/89	G. P. Levy
1989 -	A. K. Jackson

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This collection of writing, reminiscences and photographs has been put together to mark the Centenary of the Old Finchleians Club, showing how it has grown from its sixteen founder members and meetings in the old headmaster's study at Christ's College, to a thriving multi-section sports and social club today, with its own ground and clubhouse at Southover and over 780 members across the world.

A hard-backed Jubilee book published in 1954 stands as a detailed historical record of the first fifty years. This volume draws on some of that material, plus extra contributions and recently discovered photographs of the period. Together with stories and pictures covering the last five decades, it serves as an illustrated account of the full hundred years and we hope that this trip down Memory Lane evokes the spirit of the Club, past and present.

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Cover photograph: Dave Holyland